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# The Chapbooks and Broadside of James Chalmers III, Printer in Aberdeen: Some Re-discoveries and Initial Observations on His Woodcuts

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## BACKGROUND

This essay consists of two related elements. First, an empirical discussion of recent evidence to emerge for chapbook and broadside production in Aberdeen. Second, a consideration of some features of the woodcuts used by James Chalmers III and other chapbook printers, which, in the present context, provide the central evidential theme of this investigation.

Previous and contemporary scholars have argued that the north-east of Scotland has the richest ballad and popular song tradition in Britain, and that an analysis of Francis Child's still unsurpassed and authoritative five-volume compilation, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, shows that 'one-third of Child's Scottish texts and almost one-third of his A-texts [his base or 'prime' texts, from which variants may be identified] come from Aberdeenshire'.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, 'of some 10,000 variants of Lowland Scottish songs recorded by the School of Scottish Studies [of Edinburgh University] ... several thousand are from the Aberdeen area alone'.<sup>2</sup> From the early eighteenth century, popular lowland Scottish song had found itself expressed in printed form, early appearances having been James Watson's *Choice Collection of Comic and Serious Scots Poems*, 3 parts (Edinburgh, 1706–11), followed by the *Edinburgh Miscellany* (Edinburgh, 1720) and Allan Ramsay's *Tea-table Miscellany* (Edinburgh, 1723).<sup>3</sup> From the mid-eighteenth century also, Scottish chapbook texts appeared in ever increasing numbers, given over to different sub-genres, including histories, prophecies, humorous stories and collections of songs (often called garlands). Bringing together the undoubted richness of the oral tradition of north-east Scotland, and the availability (from the mid-century) of Scottish songs and ballads in cheap printed form, there has been an entirely reasonable assumption that there was a significant measure of interaction and mutual adoption between the printed word and the orally-presented ballad. Thus Thomas Crawford: 'They [the chapbooks] sometimes contained songs which their printers acquired from oral tradition; while, conversely, townsfolk and country people might learn songs from printed copies, only to transmit them to others by oral communication.'<sup>4</sup> Moreover, literacy skills increased

throughout the north-east, 'its major phase occurring ... in the second ... half of the century'.<sup>5</sup> In general, then, the extensive, rural, north-east of Scotland offered considerable potential for chapbook sales.

As Aberdeen itself was the regional capital of this sparsely populated and sometimes isolated hinterland and had supported an active printing trade since the 1620s, questions have been raised as to the level of chapbook production in the city itself. Yet this is the very point at which scholars encounter a relative dearth of comment and analysis, and what has been said largely lacks specific detail. John Morris has acknowledged that there was some chapbook printing in Aberdeen, and has claimed, indisputably, that the quantity produced was far below that emanating from any one of the individual centres of production in the Central Belt – Glasgow, Paisley, Stirling, Falkirk and Edinburgh. This relatively low level of production in the north-east is attributed to the fact that the region lay beyond the main north–south and east–west distribution routes of the Central Belt.<sup>6</sup> However, this strand of the argument may not be quite as convincing as first it appears. It is clear that, in spite of relatively low population density levels, chapbooks were available for sale in the north-east and that, in general, the book trade in Aberdeen was not, in distributional terms, at all isolated, but had good contacts with the trade elsewhere in Scotland and, more widely, in Britain. In this respect we can cite the Chalmers family firm of Aberdeen which was able to maintain widespread points of sale and distribution for the annual *Aberdeen Almanack* which had been published since the seventeenth century and which the company restarted in 1771.

Taking the establishment of the Chalmers family in Aberdeen in 1736 as a useful starting point, there are only three other firms with printing presses known to have been in business in the city over the remainder of that century: John Boyle (1760–1805, as Bruce and Boyle, 1767–69); Francis Murray (1752–68, as Douglas & Murray, 1767–69) and Andrew Shirrefs (1783–91).

John Fairley, the authority on and collector of chapbooks, records only sixteen such texts (eleven by Chalmers; five by Imlay or Keith) printed in Aberdeen before the appearance of more modern recensions starting in the 1860s.<sup>7</sup> The Chalmers chapbooks listed by Fairley are all in the National Library of Scotland's Lauriston Castle Collection. Kellas Johnstone's extensive notes, prepared as a continuation into the eighteenth century, of his monumental two-volume *Bibliographia Aberdonensis* (1929–30), are helpful in his ascription of seven religious chapbooks to James Chalmers III.<sup>8</sup> More recently, W.R. McDonald has noted that 'there was some indication that [James] Chalmers [...] was active in the ... chap-book market' and drawn attention to that printer's advertisement in his 1783 edition of *The ABC with the Shorter Catechism* that he could supply story books and ballads from his printing office. McDonald has added that 'chap-books ... are notoriously ephemeral publications, and few from [James] Chalmers's press survive'.<sup>9</sup> A fuller advertisement has since come to light, again in a religious text printed by Chalmers, *Translations and Paraphrases of Several Passages of Sacred*

*Scripture* (1776), in which he lists a long series of ‘story books, Godly books, ballads and song books’ available for sale from his premises. The list includes books of proverbs, catechisms, ‘Cherry and the Slae’, ‘Peden’s Prophetical Sermons’, ‘the famous book called Gesta Romanorum’, *The Mevis*,<sup>10</sup> *Robinson Crusoe*, ‘Lives of the Pyrates’, *Valentine and Orson*, *The Whole Prophecies of Thomas Rymer* and Tom Thumb’s Play Books<sup>2</sup>. Some of the above are known (or presumed) to have been printed by Chalmers, others bought in by the printer from elsewhere and offered for sale. But it was Duff, Bushnell and Dix who, as shall become apparent, got closest to an accurate generalisation on Chalmers, when they observed that ‘he was the printer of many Chap-books, most of which have become rare’.<sup>11</sup>

Other members of the Aberdeen book trade offer momentary insights into the regional chapbook trade. John Boyle, in an extended footnote to his 1765 advertisement for a new edition of Tate and Brady’s *Psalms*, drew attention to his having ‘a large Assortment of Chapman Books’, but no details regarding these publications’ titles were provided.<sup>12</sup> Four years earlier, in 1761, the bookseller Robert Farquhar inserted a list of ‘Chapman-books at 6d each’ in his *Catalogue of Curious and Valuable Books to be Disposed of by Way of Sale*, which included some well-known titles: ‘History of fair Rosamond’, ‘History of the 7 champions’, ‘Look e’re you Leap’ and [pseudo-]Aristotle’s ‘Midwifery’, his ‘Master-piece’, and his ‘Problems’.<sup>13</sup> In 1801, Alexander Keith, printer and bookseller in Aberdeen, was able to offer his ‘extensive assortment of Prints, Pamphlets, catechisms, Song Books, Childrens Books, and Ballads &c.’ on wholesale and retail terms.<sup>14</sup> Keith himself printed a few chapbooks and also had some produced for him by Peter Buchan of Peterhead. It is on Buchan that much scholarly attention has tended to fall because of his considerable importance as an early nineteenth-century ballad collector and also because of the subsequent editorial work he undertook and the emendations he made on the texts that he published, most notably in his *Gleanings of Scotch, English, and Irish Scarce Old Ballads* (1825) and his two-volume *Ancient Ballads and Songs of the North of Scotland* (1828).<sup>15</sup> Buchan himself had received limited training, in Stirling, at the press of Mary Randall, who is recognised as one of the most prolific chapbook producers in central Scotland.<sup>16</sup> And, when in business as a printer on his own account, Buchan produced over thirty chapbooks between 1817 and 1826.<sup>17</sup>

There is evidence – though again usually of a generalised nature – that chapbook sellers worked their way both through the city and the region beyond.<sup>18</sup> Whilst the pleas found in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Scottish almanacs for the attention of chapmen and good wishes for their prosperity often have a conventional character, it was undoubtedly not an empty convention.<sup>19</sup> There was a significant level of mutual dependence in that the chapmen provided a method of widespread distribution, whilst the almanacs themselves carried dates of fairs and markets at which the itinerant sellers could set up their pitches. Furthermore, such mutual dependence

encouraged accuracy and reliability in the details of dates, places and events. It is also pertinent to point out that by the end of the eighteenth century the distinction that had held between almanacs (which are utilitarian in nature) and chapbooks (which are mostly for entertainment) was not in all respects absolute. Kellas Johnstone's observation that, 'failing to improve with the progress of time ..., the [counterfeit] Aberdeen Almanac became a degenerate halfpenny chapbook', is dismissive but he is nevertheless right in that, by the 1790s and thereafter, 'droll stories' and 'curious [i.e. curious] anecdotes' were being included with the main block of text.<sup>20</sup>

John Magee, 'pedlar and flying stationer', recorded his itinerary in the first years of the nineteenth century, from Inverness along the Moray Firth through Nairn, Elgin and Banff, and then south to Aberdeen and onward to Dundee.<sup>21</sup> Peter Duthie, 'flying stationer', who died in 1812, apparently travelled throughout Scotland and sold copies of the *Aberdeen Almanack*, along with editions of Thomas the Rhymer and 'Arry's ware for lads and lasses, / which for the highest wisdom passes'.<sup>22</sup> Willie Gunn worked the Angus and Mearns regions to the south of Aberdeen,<sup>23</sup> whilst William Cameron ('Hawkie'), chapbook and song sheet seller, attended a 'fair between Aberdeen and Stonehaven', sometime after 1815, and stayed in the Gallowgate, Aberdeen, for five weeks. He then 'went to a fair in Old Meldrum and stayed in an alehouse'. Cameron was 'never out of Aberdeenshire for four months, and during that time ... travelled the banks of the Dee and the Don on each side of the city, upwards of thirty miles'.<sup>24</sup> However, Charles Leslie, ballad singer and seller, born in Pitcaple, Aberdeenshire, who died aged 105 and whose biography has been recorded in a number of scholarly publications, was a very well-known personality. Probably printed in the year of his death, 1782, the *Garioch Garland* recorded how – and where – his presence would be missed. A number of verses speak of his fame in Aberdeen itself, and in Strathbogie, the Garioch, Angus, Buchan and Mar – all areas in the north-east. Indeed, he was apparently known in 'all the gentlemen's houses in the several shires of Aberdeen, Banff, Mearns and Forfar'.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, it is just possible that we know a little more about Charles Leslie than we think we do. M. E. Brown has drawn attention to the intriguing, but as yet unsupported belief held both by Sir Walter Scott and the Aberdonian scholar, William Walker, that the *Ballad Book* (1827), edited by G. R. Kinloch, with its introductory 'Biographia Lesleyana', is effectively a transcription of 'items of Leslie's stock-in-trade'.<sup>26</sup>

Alexander ('Saunders') Laing, described as a 'flying stationer, book-cavasser and chapman' and also recognised as an editor of three printed ballad collections,<sup>27</sup> came to know the rural north-east and its history intimately while peddling his own compilations. Some chapmen did not sell books, and of those that did, many carried a wide variety of other merchandise – cloth, utensils for making clothes, small articles of clothing, and animal skins being often mentioned.<sup>28</sup> This more general pattern of sale was probably the case with those listed amongst the subscribers, all of whom lived outwith the city,

to *The Lama Sabachthani; or, the Cry of the Son of God* (Glasgow: printed for Andrew and Alex. Barclay, Merchants in Old Meldrum, 1761). William King, chapman in 'Rhynis', i.e. Rhynie, agreed to take 12 copies, as did John Ironside, chapman of 'Tyvis' (probably Tarves).<sup>29</sup>

Bannerman's *Aberdeen Worthies* offers us two urban insights: the first, of a blind man and his wife 'who for years entertained ... [the] subjects of ... [Aberdeen] with some of the more sublime productions of the day, "a' i' the same ballant, for a bawbee"'. And from the window of the bookshop of Mrs Thomson (d.1794) could sometimes be seen 'King Pipin', 'Death of Cock Robin', 'Lothian Tom', 'Willie and Eppy' and the 'Witty Jests of George Buchanan'.<sup>30</sup>

#### EVIDENCE: THE CHAPBOOK AND BROADSIDE WOODCUTS

Two composite volumes, one in the Lilly Library, Indiana University, and the other in the British Library, can together modify assessments of the output of chapbooks and broadsides in Aberdeen. The volume in the Lilly Library includes thirty-one Aberdeen-printed chapbooks, with partial imprints (very few carry a date of publication), whilst the volume in the British Library consists of forty different broadsides which do carry printed dates of production but no further information. When the contents of the two volumes are compared, some important insights emerge.

The contents of the composite volume in the Lilly Library are currently listed in that Library's specialist online catalogue of chapbooks, but do not appear (at the time of writing) in *ESTC*, though the absence of dates of printing make any inclusion in that database particularly hazardous. The Lilly Library composite volume has a solid provenance. There is a pencilled note on the upper endpaper that it was 'From John Hill Burton's Library'. Fortunately, this statement can be confirmed by the volume's appearance in the sale catalogue of Burton's library in 1881, where it is listed as 'Aberdeen Garlands and Chap. Books, a collection of about 26 in 1 vol. half morocco. Aberdeen 1801'.<sup>31</sup> At this point, the volume drops out of sight, but it reappears in 1929 – included on the 'on approval' invoice of Thomas Warburton of Manchester offering, *inter alia*, '31 Aberdeen Chap Books c1790', at US\$30, and thus constitutes one of the earlier items purchased by George Ball in the establishment of what has become the outstanding Elizabeth Ball Collection of Historical Children's Materials.<sup>32</sup>

The re-discovery of the previous ownership of the volume by John Hill Burton, historian, records scholar, miscellaneous writer and legal author, caused some initial concern, given the popular – and ostensibly accurate – story that he had been instrumental in perpetrating a deception on the Peterhead printer, Peter Buchan. Burton, with others, had succeeded in composing and passing off as genuine, a ballad, *Chil Ether*, when in fact it was a modern forgery, yet

accepted, edited and emended by Buchan as authentically old.<sup>33</sup> What this does demonstrate, however, in Burton's favour, was his considerable familiarity with and knowledge of the genre. Born in Aberdeen in 1809 and subsequently educated at Marischal College, Burton probably collected these chapbooks before his leaving to pursue a career in Edinburgh, a little after 1826.

The contents of this composite volume in Indiana have together acted as a catalyst, and provided a key, for a closer study of the production of chapbooks and cognate forms of popular print in the north-east. The Lilly Library volume comprises twenty-three chapbooks printed in Aberdeen by J. Chalmers & Co., a form of imprint used by the firm between 1770 and 1810, the other eight by Alexander Keith or Alexander Imlay, at work in Aberdeen in the early nineteenth century.

Tom Crawford has consistently held that the items in the relevant composite volume of ballads in the British Library<sup>34</sup> were printed in Aberdeen, and in this he has been supported by David Buchan.<sup>35</sup> But neither scholar has developed their reasons for their attribution of these broadside ballads to Aberdeen, though Crawford does draw attention to the large number of references to the city within them.<sup>36</sup> It is perhaps worth noting at this point that *ESTC* assigns them provisionally to Edinburgh. Technically, whether they should all be regarded as broadsides, or, as *ESTC* has done, to consider some as uncut slip-songs,<sup>37</sup> is a nice point, but in so far as they are uncut, researchers are helped by being able to see the entire side (text and woodcuts) of a printed sheet, and the extent of the conclusions provisionally reached in these notes would probably have been nigh impossible had the sheets been cut, and the ballads separated.

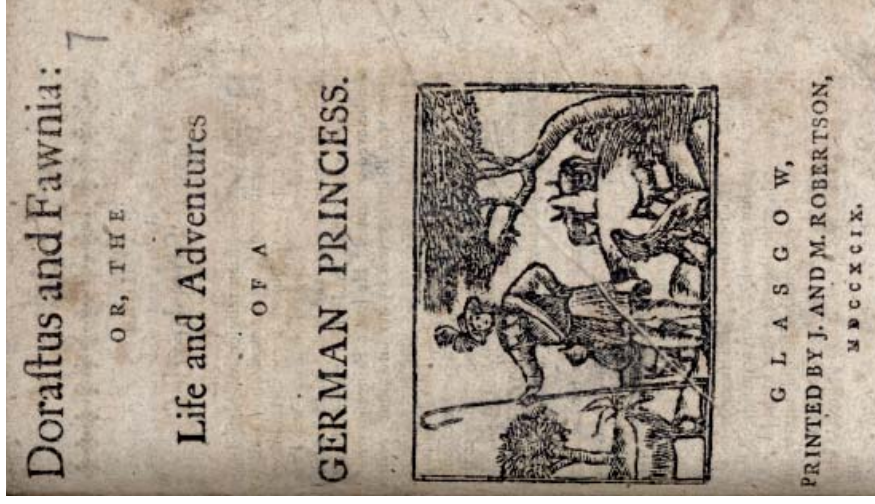
If we bring together the fourteen (out of the total of twenty-three) Chalmers chapbooks in Indiana which are not recorded elsewhere, a lesser number of re-discoveries in the Bodleian Library, Oxford University, Glasgow and Princeton University Libraries, and those that have been long known about, we arrive at a total of forty-five titles explicitly printed by the Aberdeen firm. (See appendix for interim list and census.) Altogether the title-page and end-piece woodcuts in these forty-five chapbooks constitute a body of detail that is sufficient to allow a series of inferences to be made, to a high level of probability, as to the place of printing, and the printer of the aforementioned broadsides in the British Library.<sup>38</sup>

Furthermore, a close examination of woodcuts used in chapbooks can have an unsettling effect on otherwise unchallenged hypotheses, yet not necessarily advance our knowledge of who actually undertook the printing – or when. In short, they can complicate matters. It is, for example, generally asserted that the eight Gaelic chapbooks, all with the imprint, 'printed and sold by the publisher, Inverary', actually came from the press of the Glasgow printer, Thomas Duncan, for the chapman, Peter Turner, and are dated to c. 1810.<sup>39</sup> This may indeed still be the case, but at least two of the Gaelic chapbooks have title-page woodcuts that were used broadly contemporaneously by James





**Figure 1:** *Ioram na truaighe, le Issachari M'Aula do Thighearna Assinn* [...], Inveraray, c. 1815 (Aberdeen University Library. Special Collections & Archives. LibR 3985 Cha 2.4)



**Figure 2:** *Dorastus and Fawnia* [...], Glasgow: Robertson, 1799 (Aberdeen University Library. Special Collections & Archives. LibR 82:3985 Cha h2.7)



Robertson, the major chapbook printing firm in Glasgow's Saltmarket (Figures 1 and 2).<sup>40</sup>

Whilst the sceptic may argue that it is always possible to demonstrate the invalidity of such inferences by bringing forth (a) counter example(s), this article puts forward a view that the evidence to be presented is strong, consistent, points in one direction only, and that there is currently nothing demonstrable that would invalidate or falsify the conclusions arrived at. Indeed, far from arguing that Crawford and David Buchan were wrong about the British Library broadsides, these notes set out with a more constructive and agreeable aim, to corroborate their stance, and also to go further, to identify the printer concerned as James Chalmers III of Aberdeen. But clearly, such a series of assertions stands in need of both demonstration and justification.

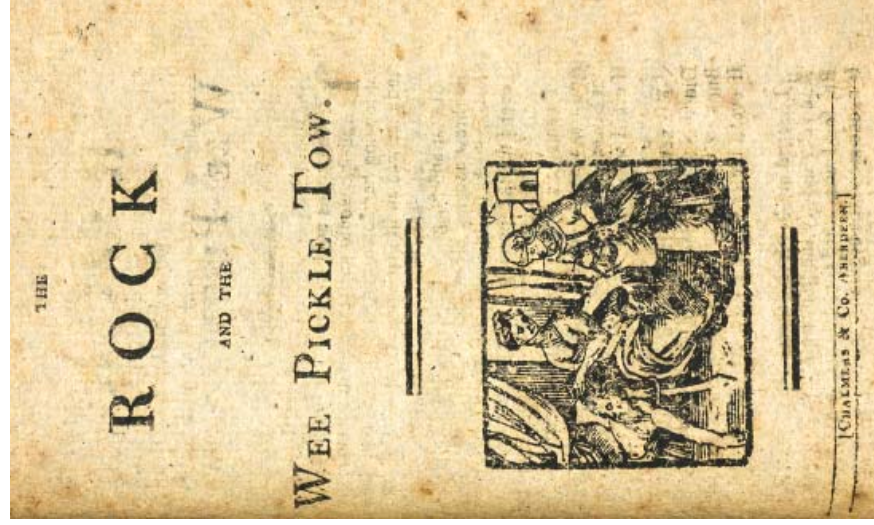
The broadsides have a clear stylistic and temporal coherence in that the great majority is dated in a particular way, by month and year, over a limited time-span, thirteen months between May 1775 and June 1776, and the paper stock used looks very similar in all cases. All but one of the broadsides have chain lines running horizontally, between 2.5 and 2.7cms apart.

Summarily, we can directly attribute fifteen of the different broadsides to Chalmers, as they carry woodcuts or type ornaments that appear in his chapbooks and other publications (that carry the firm's imprint). Moreover, a further eighteen broadsides can be indirectly attributed to him, in so far as these carry woodcuts and type ornaments that appear, not in the chapbooks themselves, but in the fifteen broadsides directly attributed to the printer. The result of this is that of the forty different broadsides in the British Library composite volume only seven cannot be assigned to the Chalmers press on the grounds of woodcut or broader typographical use.

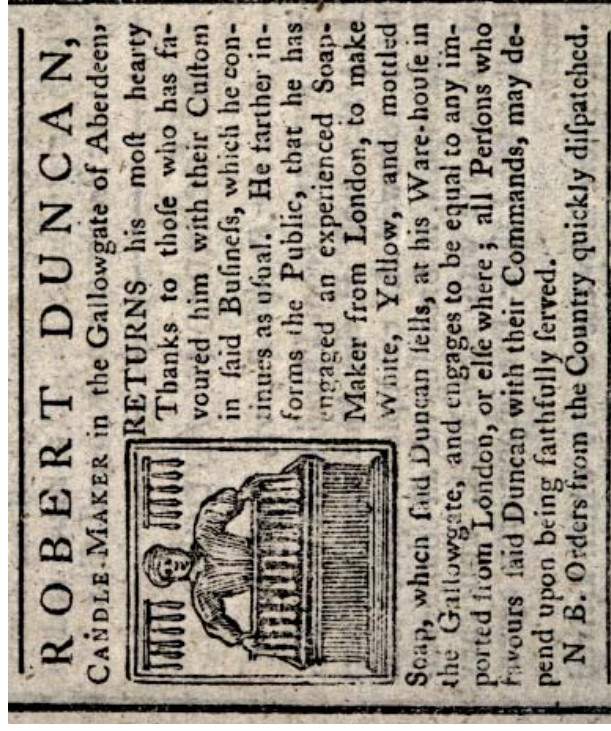
#### WOODCUTS IN CHALMERS'S CHAPBOOKS AND BROADSIDES: EXAMPLES OF DIRECT ATTRIBUTION

The woodcut used on the title-page of the chapbook, *The Rock and The Wee Pickle Tow* (Figure 3) is that of the beheading of Holofernes by Judith. It has its origin in the deuterocanonical Book of Judith, a scene frequently depicted by Renaissance and Baroque artists. In the present context, however, its importance lies in the fact that it also appears at the head of the broadside *Charly is My Darling [and] O'er Bogie [and] The Wandering Shepherdess*. The woodcut image on the chapbook and on the broadside has the same dimensions (approx. 4.4 x 4.8 cms).

Similarly, three chapbooks, the *Cheerful Companion [...]*, the *Cruel Cooper of Kirkaldy* and the *Sailor's Tragedy [...]*, all carry the same woodcut of a five-bay country house on their respective title-pages. This woodcut is also found on two broadsides, *Babes in the Wood [and] the Rainy Bow*, and the *Ravelled Booking of the Ord [and] Ranty Tanty*. In all impressions (including



**Figure 3:** *The Rock and the Wee Pickle Tow.* Aberdeen: J. Chalmers & Co., n.d. (Indiana University. Lilly Library. PR974.A1#897)



**Figure 4:** Woodcut of candle-maker advertisement, *Aberdeen Journal*, 17 September 1770 (Aberdeen University Library. Special Collections & Archives. ff07 AJ)

both chapbooks and broadsides) the woodcut measures (approx. 2.3 x 4.3 cms). A further example is that of the standard personification of mortality and death as the Grim Reaper, which appears on the chapbook, *Three Excellent New Songs; called The Wicked Wife [...]* (see Thomas the Rhymer, Figure 10) and also, appositely, on two broadsides, *The Gallant Grahams [and] Captain Johnston's Last Farewell* (Figure 7), as well as, separately, *The Six Stages of Man's Life Displayed [and] the Heavenly Damsel; or, The Parent's Blessing* (approx. 4.0 x 4.0 cms).

#### WOODCUTS: CHALMERS'S CHAPBOOKS, BROADSIDES AND OTHER FORMS OF PUBLICATION

However, the woodcuts used by Chalmers in his chapbooks were not limited to that particular form of publication. Alexander Taitt's *Right of the House of Stewart to the Crown of Scotland*, printed by Chalmers in 1746, and John Bisset's *Sermon Preached in the New-church of Aberdeen* (1749) carry on their respective title-pages an ornament piece of a stylised flower basket. That same ornament piece appears in *Ravelled Booking of the Ord [and] Ranty Tanty* and *Dialogue between Death and a Beautiful Lady [and] The Sorrowful Lover's Regrate [...]*. In all cases the piece measures (approx. 2.5 x 2.0 cms).

However, the examples provided so far, although persuasive, do not quite counter the hypothetical objection that the woodcuts may have been acquired by Chalmers & Co. for his series of chapbooks from an unknown printer, either earlier or later than the production of the broadsheets. But there is one woodcut the use of which renders such an objection if not impossible, then certainly extremely implausible. The woodcut of a candle-maker appears several times, on 9 July 1770 and on 17 September 1770, in the advertising columns of the *Aberdeen Journal*, a newspaper owned and printed by the Chalmers family (Figure 4). That same woodcut block makes an appearance in the broadside, *Dialogue between Death and a Beautiful Lady [and] The Sorrowful Lover's Regrate [...]*, which was printed in May 1776. However, the block of the candle-maker reappears as an advertisement in the *Aberdeen Journal* of 6 October 1777, that is, *after* the printing of the broadsides. In all instances, the block measures (approx. 2.5 x 2.3 cms). Circumstances can be imagined that might account for the woodcut's movement between James Chalmers and an unknown printer, but such complexities unnecessarily challenge the reasonable explanation, which is simply that it had remained in Chalmers's possession all the time.

CHALMERS'S WOODCUTS: EXAMPLES OF INDIRECT  
ATTRIBUTION — FROM BROADSIDE TO BROADSIDE

If we accept that the direct attribution to Chalmers of fifteen broadsides is secure, then what of those that can be attributed indirectly? The title-page of the chapbook, *The Mournful Lady's Garland* (Figure 5), carries a woodcut that was somehow split, with apparently no right-hand border, but which can be seen in its entirety on the broadside, *The Wandering Jew [and] Barbara Allen's Cruelty* (Figure 6; the left-hand element of the composition (as in *The Mournful Lady's Garland*) measures approx. 7.8 x 4.2 cms.)

But that particular broadside *additionally* carries a woodcut of two knights fighting (positioned over *Barbara Allen's Cruelty*), which is not currently known to appear on any of Chalmers's chapbooks. If *The Wandering Jew [and] Barbara Allen's Cruelty* is assigned to Chalmers, then it is a reasonable hypothesis that another broadside of the same or close date carrying the same woodcut of the knights fighting could also be regarded as printed by Chalmers, unless there was stronger evidence to the contrary. And indeed, the woodcut of the two knights fighting with lances appears in the broadside *Chevy-Chace [and] Hearts of Oak [and] Clout the Cauldron*.

Further examples can be brought forward. It has been shown above that some of the woodcuts used in *Dialogue between Death and a Beautiful Lady [and] The Sorrowful Lover's Regrate [...]* confirm its printing by Chalmers & Co. A particular *memento mori* woodcut was placed above *A Dialogue between Death and a Beautiful Lady*. It also appears in *The Black-a-moor in the Wood [and] Balance a Straw [and] The Bonnet so Blue* wherein it is the only woodcut block, but its presence is sufficient to suggest that Chalmers & Co. were responsible for the printing of that broadside also.

CHALMERS'S WOODCUTS: EXAMPLES OF PREVIOUS USE

The establishment of ownership of the various chapbook and broadside woodcuts provides a basis from which to consider other material printed in Aberdeen. It can also confirm suspicions regarding the printers of texts printed in that city before the broadsides. *The Gallant Grahams [and] Captain Johnston's Last Farewell* carries three woodcuts above the first ballad. The central coat of arms appears as the tailpiece to *The Rock and The Wee Pickle Tow*, but the more interesting one is that of a man and woman, cudgels in hands (Figure 7). It appears as a tailpiece (approx. 3.6 x 5.5 cms) to the chapbooks, *Three Excellent New Songs; called the Irish Wedding [...]*, with an explicit imprint citing Chalmers & Co. as the printers, and also on the title-page of *Four Excellent New Songs: The New Way of the Lass of Benochie [...]*, the imprint of which merely records, 'Printed at Aberdeen October, 1793'. But its first appearance on a local production was much earlier, on the chapbook,





**Figure 5:** *The Mournful Lady's Garland*. Aberdeen: J. Chalmers & Co., n.d. (Indiana University Lilly Library. PR974.A1#890)



**Figure 6:** *The Wandering Jew, or, The Shoemaker in Jerusalem ... Barbara Allen's Cruelty; or, The Young Man's Tragedy*, 1775 (British Library. 1346.m.7(16))



Figure 7: *The Gallant Grahams. Captain Johnston's Last Farewell*. 1346.m.7(32))



*Peter and Betterish; or, The Woman's Spleen Abated*, which carries the simple imprint 'Aberdeen: printed in 1739'. The evidence now before us is thus sufficiently strong to attribute this 1739 chapbook to James Chalmers II, the founding printer of the firm, who had started work in Aberdeen three years earlier, in 1736.

As already indicated, connections can be found, not only between chapbook and broadside, but between chapbook or broadside and other material printed in Aberdeen. Two chapbooks printed by Chalmers & Co., *The Songster's Delight, being a Choice Collection of Songs, containing My Nannie O [...]* and *The Cruel Step-Mother, or the Unhappy Son [...]*, carry on their title-pages what was a rather tired factotum (Figure 8; approx. 4.6 x 4.6 cms). It is a venerable typographical piece and can be traced back to James Urquhart's *Placita nonnulla philosophica de rerum cognitione* (Aberdeen: successors of John Forbes [i.e. James Nicol], 1710).

The broadside, *Gill Morice [and] Time Enough Yet*, printed in 1775, carries an ornamental headpiece, which is stylistically anachronistic, and can be shown to have been used nearly seventy years beforehand, in William Smith's *Theses philosophicae* (Aberdeen: successors of John Forbes, 1708) and, again, in David Anderson's *Dissertatio theologica inauguralis de peccato originali* (Aberdeen: successors of John Forbes 1711). We therefore have a likely chain of provenance for this woodcut, from John Forbes' widow to James Nicol, who retired in 1736, to be succeeded as the official town's printer, by James Chalmers II.<sup>41</sup>

The broadside, *Charly is my Darling [and] O'er Bogie [and] The Wandering Shepherdess*, has a series of woodcuts at its head, one of which is the coat of arms of Marischal College, Aberdeen, set sideways on the sheet. Very similar woodcuts were employed by Chalmers's predecessors when printing that college's graduation theses, and it also appears as a blind stamp on some bindings. It is hard to see why such a woodcut – one called upon for specific events at a particular institution – should have left Aberdeen, as that is where it was most enduringly useful. And any doubt about the printer of this edition of *Charly is my Darling [...]* and the provenance of the woodcuts can be put aside as what started life as a cut of Charles II (its use presumably suggested by the song, *Charly is My Darling*, referring to Charles Edward Stewart) appears on the last page of Chalmers's printing, in 1753, of T. H.'s *The Child's Guide*.

#### CHALMERS'S WOODCUTS: IDENTIFYING THE PRINTER

The woodcuts under consideration can provide evidence as to the printer of Aberdeen chapbooks that have no named printer. Bibliographers may now ascribe a further twenty chapbooks (allowing for a vagueness in the definition of 'chapbook') to Chalmers, though this total does include the seven of a religious nature identified long ago by Kellas Johnstone.



**Figure 8:** *The Songster's Delight, being a Choice Collection of Songs [...].* Aberdeen: J. Chalmers & Co., n.d. (Indiana University. Lilly Library. PR974.A1#898)



**Figure 9:** *Four Excellent New Songs; Called Bryan O'Lin [...].* Aberdeen: J. Chalmers & Co., n.d. (National Library of Scotland. L.C. 2787(1))

*The Garioch Garland [...]*, printed in late 1782 or 1783, is a chapbook that has been closely studied and which celebrates the life of the chapman Charles Leslie. It has no imprint and carries on its last page a woodcut that reasonably accurately depicts the subject himself. It was obviously especially cut for the garland, as it carries the incised initials 'CL'. The woodcut (approx. 9.0 x 5.7 cms) also appears in Chalmers's *Four Excellent New Songs; called Bryan O'Lin [...]* (Figure 9), which cannot realistically have been printed before *The Garioch Garland [...]*. But the presence of the woodcut in the *Garioch Garland [...]*, combined with some of the verses mourning James Chalmers's loss of a source of income –

Those Songs in the long Nights of Winter,  
Bonny Laddie, Highland Laddie;  
He made, and Chalmers was the Printer,  
My bonny Highland Laddie. (lines 84–87)

– together point to James Chalmers having been the printer of *The Garioch Garland*.

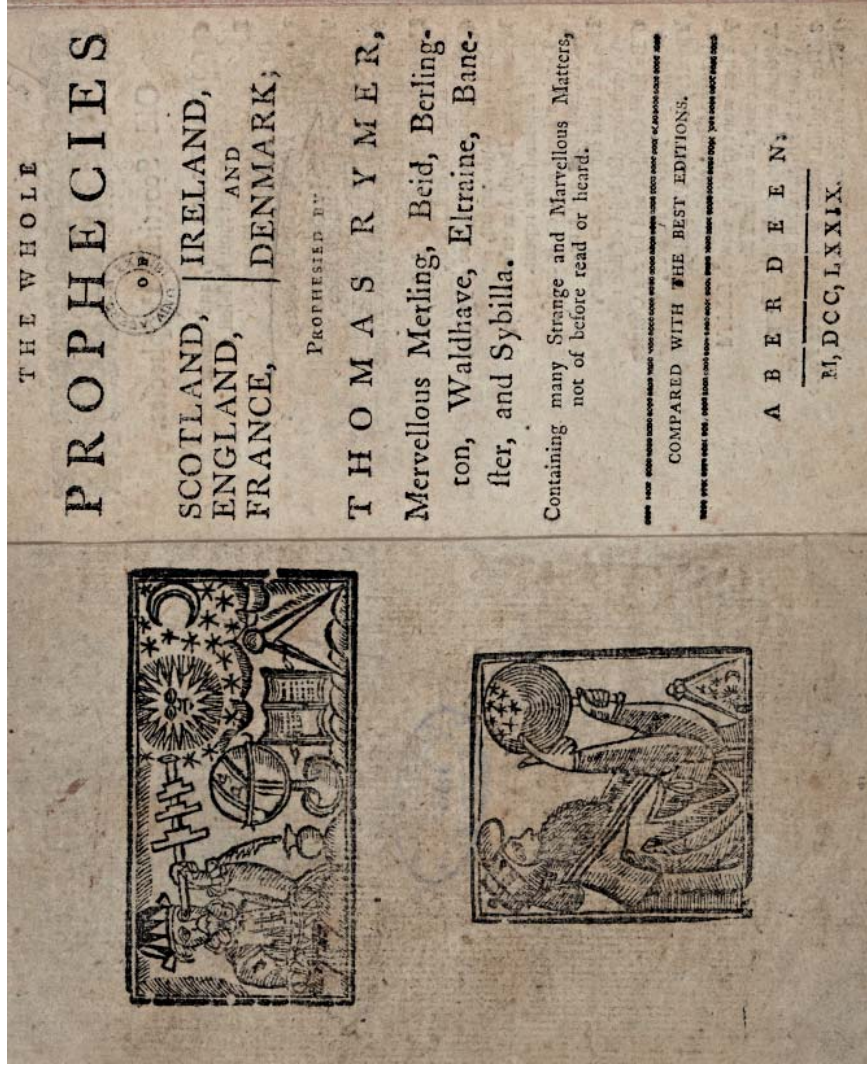
There are two Aberdeen editions (1774 and 1779, neither with named printer) of *The Whole Prophecies of [...] Thomas the Rymer; with Marvellous Merlin [...]*. There is evidence that the earlier edition came from Chalmers's press, as there is a work, with a close approximation to the actual title, which appears in the printer's advertisement at the end of his edition of *Translations and Paraphrases of Several Passages of Sacred Scripture* (1776).<sup>42</sup> The matter can now be settled: both editions were printed by Chalmers. The last page of the 1774 edition carries five woodcuts (Figure 10), one of which is the 'Grim Reaper' as it appears in *Three Excellent New Songs; called The Wicked Wife [...]*, explicitly printed by Chalmers, but the 1774 edition also carries a woodcut of an astronomer (or astrologer) and globe (approx. 4.7 x 4.6 cms) which is to be found on π1<sup>v</sup> in the 1779 version (Figure 11). Furthermore, the horizontal woodcut of the astronomer using a navigational cross-staff (approx. 3.9 x 7.2 cms) was used partially to decorate the broadside, *John Armstrong's Last Good-night [and] The Downfall of Gilderoy [and] An Excellent New Song Intituled, Love will Find out the Way*, 1776. And if further evidence was wanted that Chalmers printed *John Armstrong's Last Good-night [and] The Downfall of Gilderoy [...]* a comparison of the woodcut of the bottle on that broadside with the cut on *The Jolly Young Fellow [...]*, a chapbook explicitly printed by Chalmers, indicates that they are the same.

Some 40 years later, about 1816, the 'astronomer and globe' woodcut that appeared in the two editions (1774/1779) of *Thomas the Rymer* re-appeared in Scottish popular literature, emanating from the Stirling press of John Fraser & Co. who printed a 24-page chapbook, *The Prophecies of Thomas the Rhymer [...]*. Chalmers evidently disposed of some of his woodcuts, at least two of which came into the possession (directly or otherwise is not known) of the





**Figure 10:** Thomas the Rhymer, *The Whole Prophecies* [...]. Aberdeen, 1774 (British Library. 10761.i.10(2))

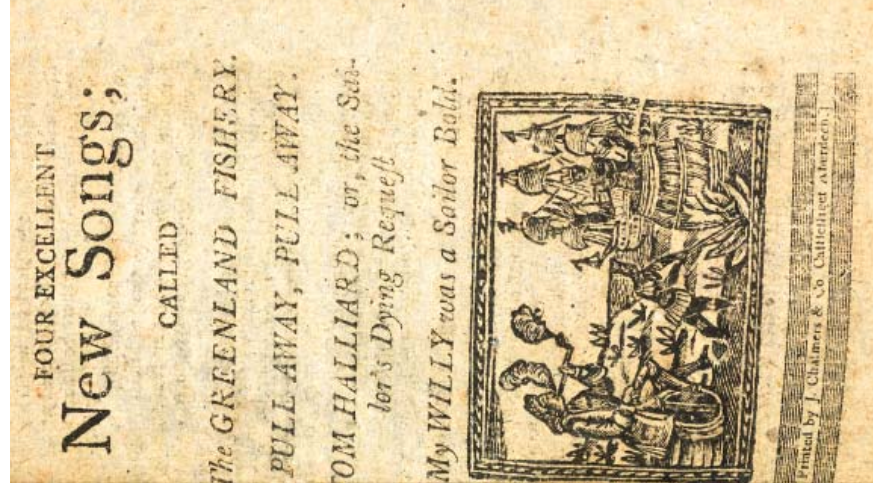


**Figure 11:** Thomas the Rhymer, *The Whole Prophecies* [...]. Aberdeen, 1779 (Aberdeen University Library. Special Collections & Archives. SBL 1779T)





**Figure 12:** Last page of *The Songster's Delight, being a Choice Collection of Songs [...]*. Aberdeen: J. Chalmers & Co., n.d. (Indiana University. Lilly Library. PR974.A1#898)



**Figure 13:** *Four Excellent New Songs; Called The Greenland Fishery [...]*. Aberdeen: J. Chalmers & Co., n.d. (Indiana University. Lilly Library. PR974.A1#891)



Stirling firm. The title-page of Fraser's printing of *The Lass near Woodhouslee* [...] carries on its title-page a woodcut of a bird on the wing that also appeared decades earlier on Chalmers's production of *The Songster's Delight*, [...] *My Nannie O* [...] (Figure 12). The second woodcut of the astronomer (or astrologer) that appears in the 1774 edition of *Thomas the Rhymer* (see above) and positioned beside the 'Grim Reaper' also travelled south. It was used on the title-page of the Glasgow-printed *Be a Good Boy and Take Care of Yourself* [...], dated to c. 1825.

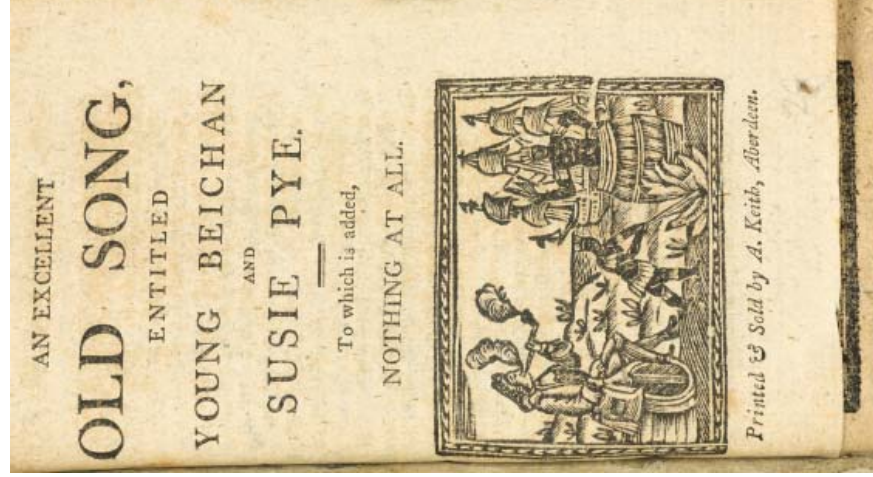
The Aberdeen printer, Alexander Keith, is known to have printed a few chapbooks in the first decade of the nineteenth century, and at least two of Chalmers's woodcuts were acquired by him. Some woodcuts were popular choices by Chalmers and, later, Keith. The rectangular woodcut (approx. 4.8 x 6.4 cms) of a trader, sitting on a barrel and smoking tobacco, was something of a favourite, as it appears in *Four Excellent New Songs; called The Greenland Fishery* [...] (Figure 13), *The Sailor Bold* [...] and the broadside, *The Greenwich Garland* [...], all from Chalmers's press, and then in Alexander Keith's *An Excellent New Song, entitled Young Beichan and Susie Pye* [...] (Figure 14).

*The Comical and Witty Jokes of John Falkirk the Merry Piper* (Aberdeen: printed in the year 1790) is yet another chapbook that was probably printed by Chalmers & Co., and this assertion is made on the basis of two woodcut blocks that appear on page 12. The 'Daily Post' factotum (approx. 2.9 x 2.8 cms) was used in identifying news columns in the *Aberdeen Journal* (for 1 May 1775) and the other, an advertising block for 'Betton's True and Genuine British Oil', graced the broadside, *A Dialogue between Death and a Beautiful Lady [and] The Sorrowful Lover's Regrete; or, The Low-lands of Holland*.

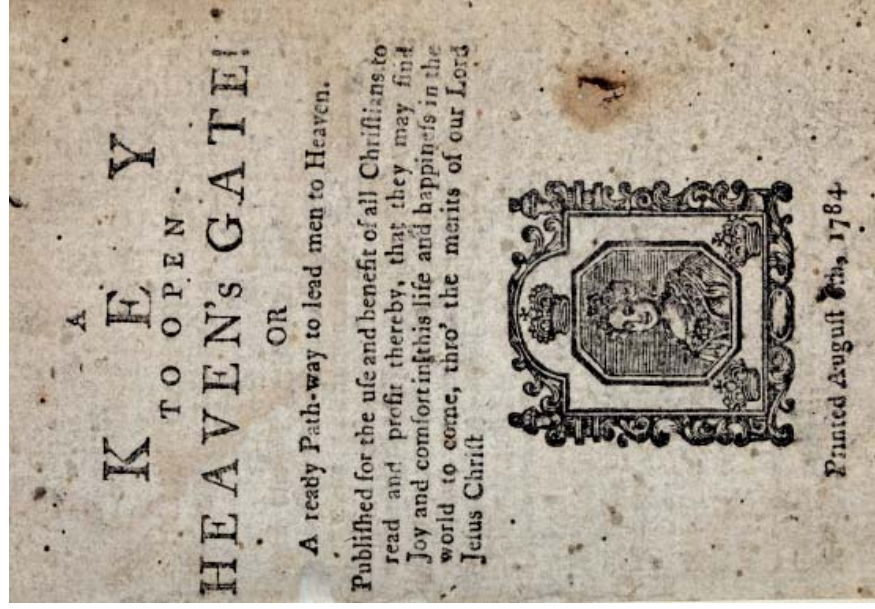
Given his authority and intimate knowledge of Aberdeen printers, there is no good reason to assume that Kellas Johnstone's ascription of seven religious chapbooks to Chalmers is wrong. Indeed, there is physical evidence from two of them to support his claim. Chalmers's 1782 edition of Thomas Wilcox's frequently reprinted, and assumedly popular *A Choice Drop of Honey from the Rock Christ*, carries, on page 16, the same circular woodcut block of Marischal College arms (diameter 6.3 cms) as *Charly is my Darling* [...].

Laurence Price's *A Key to Open Heaven's Gate!*, printed by Chalmers in 1784, carries on its title-page the same, rectangular, rather regal-looking woodcut (Figure 15) as *The Maid's Hopes in the Lottery [and] The Lass on the Brow of the Hill*. (A third religious chapbook, *Cogitations upon Death, or Mirror of Man's Misery*, has a rectangular woodcut, not known to have been used elsewhere, with conventional symbols of mortality and death.)

We are left with at least one major question: Which came first, the broadsides or the chapbooks? Direct evidence is thin, but what we know suggests that some of the chapbooks were printed very near the end of the eighteenth century. Leaf [A]4 of the Lilly Library's copy of *Jocky to the Fair* [...] carries a watermark date of 1797, and there is some textual evidence in



**Figure 14:** *An Excellent Old Song, entitled Young Beichan and Susie Pye [...].* Aberdeen: A. Keith, n.d. (Indiana University. Lilly Library. PR974.A1#904)



**Figure 15:** Laurence Price, *A Key to Open Heaven's Gate!*; or, *A Ready Path-way to Lead Men to Heaven*, 1784 (Aberdeen University Library. Special Collections & Archives. SBL 1777 C2)

the other chapbooks consistent with this late-century date. The song, *Croppies Lie Down*, in the *Agreeable Songster* [...], refers, in a manner typical of the time, to those regarded as antipathetic to the government in the Irish Rebellion of 1798.<sup>43</sup> The highly patriotic tone of *The Recruiting Serjeant* in *The Sailor Bold*. To which is added, *The Recruiting Serjeant* [...] also undoubtedly points towards the end of the century and the wars with France.

In total, though, Chalmers's chapbooks can be simply characterised: they consist mostly of eight pages, with a single woodcut on the title-page, the occasional ornamental division within the text itself, and otherwise no accompanying illustrations other than sometimes a woodcut on the final page, after the completion of the text. The chainlines are horizontal, and their format is usually given as duodecimo. Chalmers's chapbooks, unexceptionally, were printed on poor quality paper. This feature is often explained by a need on the part of the printer to keep costs down, and this may be true in many cases, including this one, though the Chalmers family was prosperous and very much part of polite society in eighteenth-century Aberdeen. But it does raise a question as to what extent the physical appearance and paper quality of chapbooks were reflections of cultural expectations. Overall, Chalmers's chapbooks are typographically utterly conventional and share their features with the multitude of chapbooks printed at broadly the same time throughout Britain.<sup>44</sup>

The immediate result of a close study of the woodcuts used by Chalmers is that we can now assign something like twenty-one additional chapbooks to his press, and with a high degree of certainty, some thirty-three broadsides.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, if we allow for the fact that the broadsides were printed within a narrow period of time and probably gathered together *en bloc*, then the total rises from thirty-three to forty. Although the dates of printing these broadsides cover only thirteen months, it is entirely feasible that they were produced in sufficiently large numbers to have remained in stock for many years afterwards.<sup>46</sup>

Why they were printed in 1775 and 1776 is unclear, but they were undoubtedly part of a trend: it is noticeable that the 1770s saw a marked rise in the number of titles of Scottish songs and poetry – new and reprinted, and with a significant proportion in Scots – emanating from Aberdeen presses, including Ramsay's *Tea-table Miscellany*, *Gentle Shepherd* and *Poems* (John Boyle, 1775 and 1776), *The Scots Blackbird* (Chalmers for William Coke in Leith, 1766), *The Mevis* (Chalmers, 1774), Charles Keith's *Farmer's Ha'* (Chalmers, 1776), and Alexander Ross's *The Fortunate Shepherdess* (Douglas, 1768), the publication of which had the support of Professor James Beattie.<sup>47</sup> Slightly later than the broadsides, Chalmers published a subsequent edition of Ross (1778), and three years later, in 1781, Forbes Stephen's *Rural Amusement* [...] written in the Scotch Dialect.

But the most important result to have been gained from this investigation is not further confirmation of the already well-recognised dominance of the Chalmers firm as printers in the north-east, nor an exercise in bibliographical

exactitude in assigning further titles to that firm, nor in offering or advocating corrected details of place of printing. Rather, by placing the production of these broadsides and chapbooks in Aberdeen, scholars can offer up evidence that may contribute to a greater understanding of the print cultural processes of that part of Scotland.

## PART II: RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT CHAPBOOK WOODCUTS

Popular prints have received considerable scholarly attention, as have those in broadsides, but chapbook images have been relatively overlooked, yet many questions arise about them.<sup>48</sup> Are there *any* generalisations that might be advanced about some of the woodcuts used on the chapbooks of Chalmers and others, particularly on how they may have been intended to have been ‘read’, or on their intended use and purpose within the title-page context?<sup>49</sup> There are a number of possible approaches, as yet certainly tentative and provisional, that might provide advantageous ways of thinking about them.

There is, however, one preliminary matter to be considered, relating to the overall layout of the title-page. The title-page of *The Cruel Cooper of Kirkaldy* [...] carries the woodcut of a country house that was used several times by Chalmers. Its dimensions are modest (see above), the title itself is short, and the overall layout of the page (15.7 x 9.5 cms) is balanced and spacious. Yet the title-page (trimmed to 15.2 x 9.0 cms) of *Four Excellent New Songs; called Bryan O’Lin* [...] embodies the ‘Charles Leslie’ woodcut (see above) which is considerably larger and is set with a significantly longer title. It is verbally more compressed and looks somewhat unbalanced to contemporary judgement. But such a judgement may be the result of overly restrictive and limited criteria based on the recognised and recommended styles of layout of the majority of (eighteenth-century) books produced for the ‘regular’ trade. There is an unambiguous, albeit isolated comment, suggesting the existence of somewhat different conventions – a different design aesthetic – in the layout of chapbook title-pages. Philip Luckombe, practising printer, noted in his 1774 *Concise History of Printing* that the elements of a book’s title-page should ‘appear of an agreeable proportion and symmetry’, and ‘tho’ setting of Titles is generally governed by fancy; yet it does not follow that the excursions of every fancy should be tolerated, else too many Titles would be taken to belong to Chapmen’s books’,<sup>50</sup> though to what an extent such a charge could be levelled systematically against Chalmers is disputable. It is, however, true that the overall design of (many, not all) chapbook title-pages differs from those of other genres, in that they carry depictive woodcuts. It is, in fact, entirely characteristic of chapbooks of the period under consideration to carry some form of illustrative woodcut. (Over 88% of the chapbooks held by Aberdeen University Library have title-page woodcuts.<sup>51</sup>) It is also arguable that that very quality of being characteristic suggests another function of chapbook title-page

woodcuts, in that their presence can act as signals or markers, albeit imperfect, not so much for the book's physical features, but for the length and type of text found within.

But the broader question remains: assuming that the selection of title-page woodcuts for chapbooks was not random, though obviously limited by an individual printer's stock-in-trade, can anything be said about their function or functions on the title-pages on which they appeared? With few exceptions,<sup>52</sup> Patricia Fumerton and Anita Guerrini's conclusion that, 'on the art historical front', they 'find little evidence of interest in the low end of broadside illustration', is well taken and equally applicable to chapbook images.<sup>53</sup>

Writers and commentators have long drawn attention to the affective qualities of chapbook images. The geologist, writer and newspaper editor, Hugh Miller, described them as 'delightful', Wordsworth as 'strange and uncouth' and unforgettable, Samuel Bamford, the poet, weaver and working-class activist, found some 'horrid and awful-looking', whilst Thomas Carter, trained as a tailor, thought some 'not a little ludicrous'.<sup>54</sup> The writer, signing herself as Miss Hunter, and clearly of a similar outlook as Hannah More, was distressed at the thought of 'travelling pedlars [...] selling books and pictures of the most horrible description [...] in female boarding schools'.<sup>55</sup>

On the relationship between the verbal text and the woodcut, scholarship has not greatly proceeded beyond questioning the appropriateness of the image,<sup>56</sup> or its relevance,<sup>57</sup> or (in a closely related context) the 'incongruity between the text and image'.<sup>58</sup> And, whilst discussing ballad printers, Charles Hindley has noted that 'the printers of "broadsides" seldom care whether an ornament [...] is, or not, appropriate to the subject of the ballad, so long as it is likely to attract attention'.<sup>59</sup>

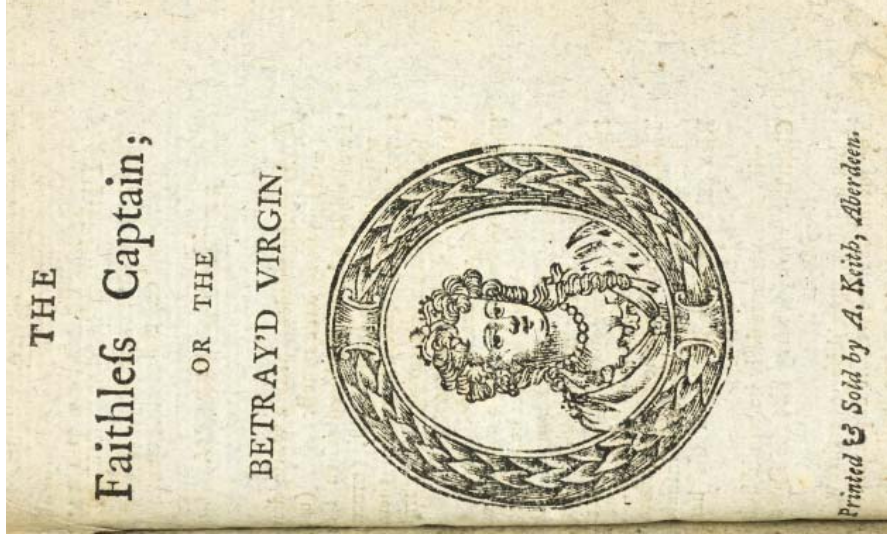
The regular re-appearance of an individual woodcut, in different contexts, has been frequently noted, to some amusement, if not bemusement. Isabel Cameron has observed that 'the quaint little wood-cuts illustrating the chapbooks are interesting productions'. She gives examples, noting that 'the clergyman marrying Maggy and Jocky [...] is in turn John Welch, Donald Cargill, Ebenezer Erskine and Isaac Watts!'.<sup>60</sup> Chalmers's woodcut of Charles Leslie (as in the *Garioch Garland* [...] and *Four Excellent New Songs; called Bryan O'Lin* [...]) is a similar such example. It is an accurate depiction of the man himself and bears a very strong resemblance to James Wales's portrait in oils in the National Galleries of Scotland.<sup>61</sup> So what is the woodcut's function on the title-page of *Four Excellent New Songs; called Bryan O'Lin* [...]? Is it straightforwardly inappropriate, as it started life as a depiction of Charles Leslie, and actually has the initials 'CL' carved into it?

The concepts with which previous researchers have furnished scholarship in discussing chapbook images tend to fall under two headings: suitability and relevance. But these need to be teased out a little, as they can be two rather different, but often overlapping qualities. We may talk about relevance as in some way 'being about' a text, as supporting or elucidating the theme or thrust





**Figure 16:** *Taste Life's Glad Moments* [...]. Edinburgh, 1823  
(Aberdeen University Library. Special Collections & Archives.  
LibR 82:3985 Cha s8.49)



**Figure 17:** *The Faithless Captain, or, The Betray'd Virgin.*  
Aberdeen: A.Keith, n.d. (Indiana University. Lilly Library.  
PR974.A1#902)



of a text (and this may include the affective quality of the woodcut) as with the airborne toy kite in the Edinburgh-printed *Taste Life's Glad Moments: to which are added, Begone Dull Care. Lovely Nan. The Woodman. Cuckoo*, 1823 (Figure 16), none of which pieces is remotely elegiac in nature, with *Begone Dull Care*, indeed, being almost defiantly cheerful.

If a particular chapbook woodcut is regarded as being a direct representation of an element of a chapbook story or song, then it becomes clear that a particular woodcut might be both relevant and simultaneously inappropriate (unsuitable), in the sense of breaching the then accepted conventions of taste, or in some way jarring or being offensive to potential readers. A woodcut of a skeleton, perhaps with an hourglass and scythe, symbolising death and the plaintively transitory nature of life, is likely to have sat uncomfortably on the title-page of *Taste Life's Glad Moments [...]*. Equally hypothetically, a woodcut of a toy kite might have been a poor choice for inclusion in the murderous story of the maltreated and abandoned *Babes in the Wood*. If we can accept that a chapbook image is best understood in the individual context in which it occurs, then the role of the woodcut in *Four Excellent New Songs; called Bryan O'Lin [...]* becomes clearer. Like Charles Leslie, the character, Bryan O'Lin, was, according to the song, a person of striking physical features.<sup>62</sup> Quite simply, in the context of *Four Excellent New Songs; called Bryan O'Lin [...]*, the woodcut is performing the role of depicting a man with noticeable physical features, who, on reading the text, is to be identified as Bryan O'Lin himself. And, whilst it is indeed accurate that the woodcut carries the initials, 'CL', this detail has no bearing on its function in the context of *Four Excellent New Songs [...]*. However, such specific detail (in the example above, the initials of the subject's name) is relatively rare in eighteenth-century chapbook woodcuts, and elements of conversation in speech bubbles or speech banners are very infrequently found in such woodcuts, presumably because utterances or exchanges would ordinarily link the woodcuts too closely to (a) particular individual(s) and a particular story and thus limit their applicability.<sup>63</sup> However, the rectangular woodcut of two individuals addressing each other as George Buchanan and Mr Bishop, is clearly appropriate for John Marshall's printing, in Newcastle upon Tyne, of *The Witty Exploits of George Buchanan Commonly Called the King's Fool [...]*.

A further example is provided by the oval woodcut (which bears some resemblance to many portraits and engravings of Queen Anne,<sup>64</sup> approx. 6.0 x 5.0 cms) that appears in two broadsides, *The Maid's Hopes in the Lottery [...]* and, separately, *Coridon and Clova [...] Oxters my Lassie*, and also two chapbooks, *Four Excellent New Songs. Called Ketty's Love to Jocky. Johnny's [sic] Kind Answer. The Fair Maid. The Longing Maid*, printed in 1782, and finally in Alexander Keith's early-nineteenth-century production of *The Faithless Captain; or the Bertray'd Virgin* (Figure 17). The role of the woodcut was presumably determined by the context in which it appeared. Arriving at an understanding of the functions (what it means in the various contexts) of

this woodcut is complicated by there being, in the case of the first-mentioned chapbook, four separate songs, with three separate subjects/objects, yet one very general and obvious feature shared by the texts of *Four Excellent New Songs* [...] is that in each case the main subject or object is female, including 'Nancy', a 'fair maid', 'bonny Ketty' and 'a longing maid'.

There is no reason to assume that either the owner of the cut, or the reader of the chapbook, were aware of its possible artistic origins. And overall, it is possibly safer to assume in this instance that the chapbook reader saw directly a depiction of 'Nancy' or a 'longing maid', depending on context, and not, simultaneously, a female figure that could be variously interpreted as a courtly individual, or Queen Anne, or 'Nancy'. Indeed, seeing the woodcut *only* as a regal or courtly portrait would have positively inhibited an understanding of its possible range of functions.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, seeing the 'Queen Anne' woodcut 'really' only as a depiction of Queen Anne may consign its appearance in other contexts to a derivative status. It might lead, unhelpfully, to a form of essentialism and discussions of its unique 'real' meaning in contrast to 'derived' meanings.<sup>66</sup> That said, there are instances where seeing a woodcut as initially intended deepens and broadens the possible range of meanings it may have for a reader (for which, see the example of Yarrow the dog, below).

The 'Queen Anne' woodcut was a visual tool of considerable flexibility and had a breadth of related uses which were largely understandable to those who shared a common visual and print culture.<sup>67</sup> The woodcut may have had both specific and general purposes in a number of differing contexts. At the head of the song, *Oxter my Lassie*, it is to be seen as a specific depiction of the subject, 'Jenny, both plump and fair', and in *The Faithless Captain*, as the 'Betray'd Virgin'. However, in *Four Excellent Songs* [...] it did duty in a more generalised sense, as illustrating what the songs had in common: i.e. a major female character.

Very many such depictive woodcuts were undoubtedly retained by chapbook printers because they could be used in a variety of related contexts. At least two chapbooks appeared under the imprint of Robert Hutchison (or Hutcheson) of the Saltmarket, Glasgow, carrying a woodcut of two men sword fighting, a very simple composition, without any form of background, a fact that probably added to its breadth of possible use, as in *The Genuine History of John M' Pherson, Pat. Fleeming, and Dick Balf, Three Notorious Irish Robbers* [...], and, separately, *Rob Roy Macgregor* [...].<sup>68</sup>

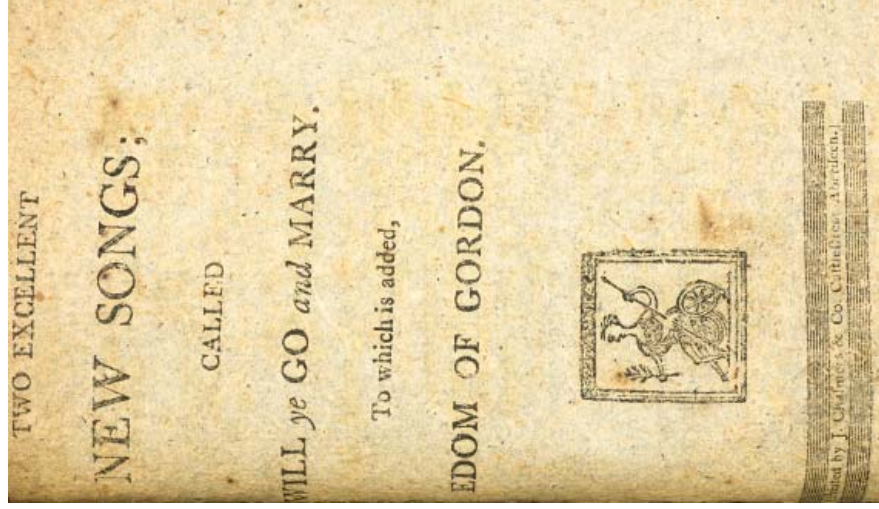
This generalised function is far from new. Limited parallels can be seen both in the use of an individual woodcut to depict a number of specific, named cities and also to illustrate a generalised urban scene, as discussed by Elizabeth Eisenstein; and, rather differently, in spelling and alphabet books where any individual object depicted ('A is for apple', 'B is for book') is generic.<sup>69</sup> But what these examples indicate is a dilemma faced by printers of chapbook songs, which is reflected, in particular, in those volumes that carry songs on disparate themes: how to illustrate the title-page, as it may simply not have been possible

(even if that were the printer's intention) to incorporate a woodcut that could have been equally relevant to all discrete sections of the production.<sup>70</sup>

There was also a conventional element strongly influencing what sort of depiction was to accompany a particular song. The woodcut of the Wandering Jew that accompanied prints, portraits and broadsides of the same name is regularly depicted as a bearded figure, wearing a hat and carrying a stick to assist his roaming until the second advent of Christ.<sup>71</sup> Chalmers followed what was a widespread, European, iconographic convention. He portrayed the Wandering Jew talking with an individual dressed in seventeenth-century style, in his printing of *The Wandering Jew [and] Barbara Allen's Cruelty*.

Scholars have drawn attention to a failing of 'accurate periodisation'<sup>72</sup> between chapbook texts and their images, as though a particular woodcut, depicting a dress style of century C, only fully performs its function (however defined) if used in a chapbook, the story in which is also set in century C, otherwise (so the line of thought proceeds) criticisms about an incongruity between text and image can legitimately be levelled. Anachronisms between text and image are extremely common. *The Perthshire Gardeners*, printed in Falkirk in 1809 by Thomas Johnston, promotes the major theme of land improvement, yet carries as a title-page woodcut an image of Adam and Eve, accompanied, as might be expected, by the serpent coiled round a tree. And, while it is true that in this instance the periodicity is inconsistent, if we grant such woodcuts to have had a specific or more general meaning according to context, then such an observation may be true but entirely beside the point.<sup>73</sup> The cut of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden raises a yet further question over perception. It was a very commonly encountered depiction that very few would not have immediately recognised it for what it was. In this instance, we may have an example of the process of an identification of a salient aspect, or 'seeing as' with priority given not to who the individuals were, but where they were – in a paradisaal garden.

Some of the title-pages of Chalmers's chapbooks show considerable restraint, the only embellishments being typographical pieces or ornaments on their title-pages. *The Crafty Squire's Garland* carries a lady's half-opened fan on the title-page, whilst that of the *Duke of Gordon's Birth Day* is limited to four fleuron-like pieces forming a square. These were probably for decorative purposes only, though it could be argued that they lent aesthetic dignity to the page; it is, however, difficult to see how they could have provided assistance to the reader in elucidating the title or contents.<sup>74</sup> In other cases, depictive woodcuts of (in the context of the particular chapbook) irrelevant subjects were exploited for decorative purposes or their striking appearance. And, at this point, it is possible that scholars have identified an interesting intersection between visual and print cultures. In spite of the limitations of woodcuts' depictive potential,<sup>75</sup> there was a loyalty and attachment (maybe even affection) towards at least some of them.<sup>76</sup> The crudely cut depiction of Britannia (which might have acted as a patriotic reminder, given the suggested late-century



**Figure 18:** *Two Excellent New Songs, called, Will Ye Go and Marry. To which is added, Edom of Gordon.* Aberdeen: J. Chalmers & Co., n.d. (Indiana University. Lilly Library. PR974.A1#895)



**Figure 19:** *Part second: The Cries of the Poor [...], second edn.* Printed for the flying stationers. Colophon: Keith, printer, Aberdeen (Indiana University. Lilly Library. PR974.A1#906)

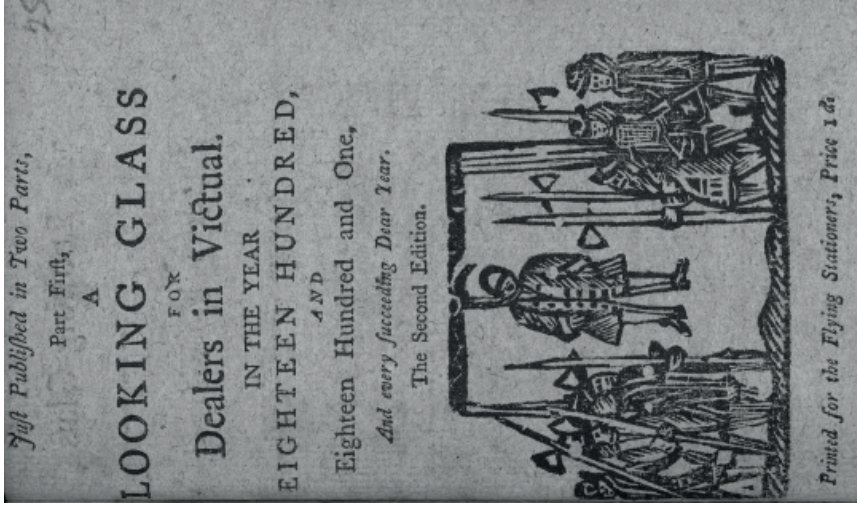


dates of the chapbooks (Figure 18)) may be described as not inappropriate, and having some limited appeal, but not directly relevant to either of the chapbooks in which it appears (i.e. *Two Excellent New Songs: Will Ye Go and Marry. To which is added, Edom of Gordon, and, Last Dying Speech and Travels of William Walker ... to which is added, The Plumber.*)

Summarily, the relevance of a depictive woodcut to a text or group of texts (as with a garland) could have been specific or generalised, depending on individual context, or totally irrelevant to the subject matter, in which case the cut has probably been used for purely decorative purposes.<sup>77</sup> A depictive woodcut may also have been relevant in that it was symbolic, and very conventional examples are found amongst Chalmers's broadside cuts, including some (skull and bones within a coffin) on the precept of *memento mori* (see the reference to *A Dialogue between Death and a Beautiful Lady* above). Relevance may have been a highly desirable feature of any chosen woodcut, but (allowing for its size) that quality simply did not guarantee its inclusion. What was essential to the printer of the time was that whatever woodcut was used, at its most basic, fundamental level, it was not to be considered as inappropriate. Yet this suggestion as it stands is manifestly incomplete, as any analysis of chapbook images will have to allow for some being not only decorative, but also being meaningful in contexts beyond the (verbal) text itself. The woodcut of the 'trader and barrel', used by both Chalmers and Alexander Keith, serves as such an example (see above, *Four Excellent New Songs; called the Greenland Fishery [...]* and *An Excellent Old Song entitled Young Beichan and Susie Pye [...]*; Figure 16). It is found in various compositional forms: in *The Wounded Hussar: to which are added, A Celebrated Indian Death-song. Savourna Delish [...]* (1799), it is the dark-skinned individual who sits astride a barrel, smoking a pipe. The figure also (and unsurprisingly) appears in chapbook woodcuts emanating from England, an example of which is Swindells' *An Excellent Garland [...]* containing *Four Choice Songs; 1. The King and Prince of Drunkards [...]*, printed in Manchester in about 1785.

These particular chapbook woodcuts contain many of the compositional elements (hogshead or barrel, pipe, Native American headdress, tobacco plant leaves, a non-confrontational social setting) that are to be found in eighteenth-century tobacco advertisements. The similarities are very noticeable.<sup>78</sup> And, while some may have seen these chapbook images in simple, almost physical terms (a figure standing, smoking) the elements within the woodcuts add up to being an allusion to a major source of Britain's prosperity, in the form of the tobacco trade and its (enforced) supply of labour.

It may also be a mistake to dismiss all chapbook woodcuts as only superficially interesting and as merely supplementary to the text. Some may have been perceived as having considerable iconological force. Such an argument could be advanced by citing two closely related Aberdeen-printed chapbooks, produced by Alexander Keith 'for the Flying Stationers'. *The Cries of the Poor [...]* carries a woodcut, captioned 'Yarrow', of an animal sadly hung



**Figure 20:** *Part first: A Looking Glass for Dealers in Victual [...], second ed. Printed for the flying stationers, [1800?]. Colophon: A. Keith, printer, Aberdeen (Oxford University. Bodleian Library. Harding A 54(25))*



**Figure 21:** *Earthenware jug, c.1790–1800. Factory of William Pratt, Staffs. (Victoria & Albert Museum. Arthur Hurst Bequest. C.45–1940)*



by the neck (Figure 19). The image has nothing to do with the ballad recorded in Child, 'The Braes o' Yarrow', but everything to do with the story of the dog, Yarrow, who, along with its master, had taken to the crime of sheep stealing, for which both were hanged.<sup>79</sup> For those who did not know the story, the image was probably little more than an animal called Yarrow being hanged. For those who were familiar with the events, it was a depiction of what befell one of the central characters of an apparently well-known series of crimes that were said to have taken place in Peeblesshire. Yet for those who both knew the story, and could relate it to the extended sub-title of the chapbook, of cries, 'directed to Heaven against the Oppression of the hard hearted farmers and wretched Meal-dealers', it may have had a much more direct, threatening and ominous meaning. The chapbooks, advertised as being in two parts, were linked by subject, and were an attack on unrestrained profiteering and manipulation of the price of meal (such perpetrators were described as thieves, robbers and bloodsuckers<sup>80</sup>) and were sympathetic towards the consequential suffering of those on low wages. The title-page woodcuts of both parts (Figures 19 and 20) reinforce each other's message: profiteers would suffer at the hands of justice if they continued their selfish ways. But for whom might such a message have been intended? Presumably for the low-waged and those who were seen to be suffering, and as such the woodcuts may have had a cohesive role in establishing an attitude and emergent class-consciousness towards the social and economic problem.

Some chapbook woodcuts could be used in a wide variety of related contexts, and their appearance was sufficiently frequent for them to be regarded as motifs. The parting of the sailor from his loved one was an extremely common ballad theme – and unsurprisingly so, given Britain's reliance on seaborne trade and defence – to the extent that they were virtually stock characters. So common were depictions of the sailor, his parting and his return that Bewick noted that 'in cottages everywhere were to be seen [prints of] the 'Sailor's Farewell' and his 'Happy Return'.<sup>81</sup>

The considerable commonality between popular prints (however defined), broadside images and those appearing in chapbooks has long been recognised, but there is a yet wider view to be taken that has been partially overlooked. It is a pity that Margaret Lambert and Enid Marx did not further develop their very pertinent insight that, 'when woodcuts and engavings [sic] for the street broadside were at their height, their style much influenced the popular art form of transfer pottery'.<sup>82</sup> A similar point has emerged in M. A. V. Gill's work on Tyne and Wear potteries and the work done for them by Ralph Beilby and Thomas Bewick, where the author notices that "'Poor Jack", "Jack on a Cruise" and similar maritime motives were favourites in the north-east [of England...]. On local pottery, after "Sunderland Bridge", the sailor designs are probably of the most frequent occurrence'<sup>83</sup> (Figure 21). And indeed, the stylistic and thematic similarities are clear and can be found on a wide variety of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British ceramic ware. The relative compositional

simplicity, the same or similar subject matter (sailors' farewells and returns, ships at anchor or under way, frequently accompanied by a few lines of verse), along with a similar style of depiction, with dates of composition from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, are cumulatively strongly suggestive of a broader art-historical context, of which chapbook images are but one part (Figure 22).<sup>84</sup> One important feature of a possible wider art-historical context resides in the fact that while many of the texts of broadsides and chapbook garlands printed in Scotland may have been aimed particularly at a Scottish market (though by no means all were),<sup>85</sup> the imagery employed was shared by chapbook printers on both sides of the border and forms part of the popular visual culture of Britain.



**Figure 22:** *A Collection of New Songs [...]*. Newcastle upon Tyne: G. Angus, n.d. (Aberdeen University Library. Special Collections & Archives. LibR 82:3985 Cha g8.30)

Available evidence suggests that the Chalmers firm abandoned chapbook printing sometime between 1797 (see *Jocky to the Fair*, above) and 1810. In

that latter year the management of the printers passed to David, the son of James Chalmers III, and the imprint changed accordingly to D. Chalmers & Co., and no chapbook is known to have been published under that form of imprint. We can say when Chalmers & Co. withdrew, but as yet, not why. A marked increase in paper prices, due to a shortage of raw materials, was noted a number of times in the announcement columns of the *Aberdeen Journal* in 1800 and 1801,<sup>86</sup> and might seem a plausible economic reason as to why Chalmers & Co. gave up printing chapbooks, but it does not fit the facts. It was in 1801 that Alexander Keith first advertised his ‘extensive assortment’ of song books and ballads; ‘notwithstanding the advanced price of papers, [he was able to offer] several of the ... articles at the usual low prices’.<sup>87</sup>

Chapbook printing did not cease in the north-east of Scotland after Chalmers & Co. withdrew from that particular market, but its subsequent volume of production was undoubtedly low. Keith himself had a business connection with Peter Buchan of Peterhead and had been in a variety of partnerships and looser associations with two other Aberdeen printers, Alexander Imlay, in business, 1800–1837, and William Gordon, 1804–29. Between Keith, Imlay and Gordon, they produced about seventeen chapbooks, the earliest dated being *The Cornwall Tragedy; or, A Brief Narrative of a Strange and Bloody Murder*, 1801, its imprint including the rather standard form of statement, ‘of Whom may be had, a variety of History, Story and Song Books, &c.’.<sup>88</sup> James Davidson in Banff dallied with chapbook printing, but so far as is known, produced only four, all undated, probably produced in the early eighteenth century.<sup>89</sup>

This diminution in chapbook printing in the north-east does not necessarily mean that chapbooks were becoming less available for purchase, though there is evidence that such was exactly the case in Aberdeen city itself. Although the Peterhead printer Peter Buchan had plenty of ballads in stock, his search amongst the Aberdeen bookshops on behalf of the collector and poet William Motherwell in 1827 for such material yielded what he considered poor results.<sup>90</sup>

But even in the early twentieth century, a few chapbooks were kept in print by Lewis Smith & Son of Aberdeen, booksellers and regional wholesalers, ‘to meet the demands of a few chapmen and hawkers who still frequent ... [the] country fairs of the north’.<sup>91</sup> Their list included *Watty and Meg*, which can be dated to at least the 1790s, *The Witty and Entertaining Exploits of George Buchanan* and *Mill o’ Tiftie’s Annie; or Andrew Lammie, the Trumpeter of Fyvie*, a version of which was printed in a broadside (as *Andrew Lammie; or, Mill of Tiftie’s Anne*) over a century earlier by Chalmers in 1776.<sup>92</sup>

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#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> David Buchan, *The Ballad and the Folk*, new edition (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1977), pp. 4–5, citing William Walker, *Peter Buchan and Other Papers* (Aberdeen: Wyllie, 1915), pp. 9–10.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Crawford, ‘Scottish Popular Ballads and Lyrics of the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries: some Preliminary Conclusions’, *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 1 (1963), pp. 49–63 (p. 53); Thomas Crawford, *Society and the Lyric: A Study of the Song Culture of*

*Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1979), p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Crawford, *Society*, pp. 216–17; Stephen Brown, ‘Singing by the Book:

Eighteenth-century Scottish Songbooks, Freemasonry, and Burns’, in *From Compositors to Collectors: Essays on Book-trade History*, ed. by John Hinks and Matthew Day (New Castle, Delaware: Oak Knoll Press, London; British Library, 2012), pp. 261–78 (pp. 261–64). <sup>4</sup> Crawford, *Society*, p. 7. The state of affairs that Crawford describes is that which Buchan calls ‘the tradition in transition’. See Buchan, *Ballad*, chapters 14–17, and p. 248.

<sup>5</sup> Buchan, *Ballad*, p. 191.

<sup>6</sup> John Morris, ‘Scottish Ballads and Chapbooks’, in *Images & Texts: Their Production and Distribution in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, ed. by Peter Isaac



and Barry McKay (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1997), pp. 89–111 (pp. 108–09).

<sup>7</sup> John Fairley, 'Chap-books and Aberdeen Chap-books', *The Aberdeen Book-lover*, 2 (1916), pp. 29–34, (pp. 32–34).

<sup>8</sup> J. F. Kellas Johnstone, 'Notes for a continuation of *Bibliographia Aberdonensis*', Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Library, MS 1095/2–3.

<sup>9</sup> W. R. MacDonald, 'Some Aspects of Printing and the Book Trade in Aberdeen', in *The Hero as Printer...*, ed. C. A. McLaren (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Library, 1976), pp. 27–36 (p. 33).

<sup>10</sup> *The Mevis: being a Choice Collection of the Best English and Scots Songs* (Aberdeen: J. Chalmers & Co., 1774.) A not insubstantial collection: [4], 104p. ESTC T173036.

<sup>11</sup> Henry R. Plomer, George H. Bushnell and E. R. McC. Dix, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers who were at work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1726 to 1775*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the Bibliographical Society, 1932), pp. 291–92.

<sup>12</sup> *Aberdeen Journal*, 2 Sept 1765. John Boyle sold up in 1805. The inventory of Boyle's estate, drawn up after his death, lists nothing that was obviously a chapbook as presently understood. Ten copies of Aesop's *Fables*, eight of *Valentine and Orson* and three of *Hocus Pocus* (all listed as 12mo or smaller format) are possibilities. Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Library, MS 3267: modern copy.

<sup>13</sup> *Look e're you Leap* and the pseudo-Aristotle volumes are offered as 'chapman books'. All pre-1761 copies of 'Aristotle' listed in ESTC have more than 100 pages. The three pseudo-Aristotle titles were published in a variety of forms: either as separate sections of the *Works* of

[pseudo-]Aristotle, or else as titles in themselves.

<sup>14</sup> *Aberdeen Journal*, 9 October 1801.

<sup>15</sup> Buchan, *Ballad*, chapter 16, 'the Peter Buchan Controversy'; William Donaldson, 'Buchan, Peter (1790–1854)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. by Lawrence Goldman, online edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press; accessed 9 Feb. 2014). <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3826>.

<sup>16</sup> 'Buchan, Peter' in *Scottish Book Trade Index (SBTI)*. < <http://www.nls.uk/catalogues/scottish-book-trade-index> >.

<sup>17</sup> Buchan, *Ballad*, p. 218, citing Walker, *Peter Buchan*; John A. Fairley, 'Peter Buchan, Printer and Ballad Collector, with a Bibliography', *Transactions of the Buchan Field Club*, 7 (1902–1903), pp. 123–58.

<sup>18</sup> William Alexander, *Notes and Sketches Illustrative of Northern Rural Life in the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Douglas, 1877), pp. 157–58, wherein he identifies *The Wise Men of Gotham* and *The Witty Exploits of George Buchanan* as typical chapbook sales. A somewhat longer list appears in 'Lochlee', anon. but attributed to Joseph Robertson, record scholar and lifelong friend of John Hill Burton, *Aberdeen Magazine*, 1 (no. 10) (October 1831), pp. 558–64 (pp. 559–60).

<sup>19</sup> Edward J. Cowan and Mike Paterson, *Folk in Print: Scotland's Chapbook Heritage, 1750–1850* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2007), pp. 22–23. An early eighteenth-century example of an expressed wish for the prosperity of chapmen is in *Gloria deo in excelsis. Good News from the Stars; or, Aberdeen's New Prognostication* (Aberdeen: successors of John Forbes, 1706), p. 15, which also draws the attention of 'all brave Chapmen' to the 'lately Printed ... Ten Commandments in a large and great Letter ... and the Effigies of *Moses*

and Aaron ... all Printed and sold by the Successors of John Forbes'.

<sup>20</sup> J. F. Kellas Johnstone, 'Papers', Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Library, MS 1095/1/2.

Examples are: *Aberdeen Farmer's Pocket Companion* for 1797 and 1808. Although some of the so-called amusing stories included in these almanacs may have had a basis in fact, there are signs of their beginning to migrate into areas hitherto occupied by broadsides and chapbooks. The almanac had come a long way from its seventeenth-century form and content, for observations on which, see Jane Stevenson, 'Reading, Writing and Gender in Early Modern Scotland', *The Seventeenth Century*, 27 (2012), pp. 335–74 (p. 345).

<sup>21</sup> John Magee, *Some Account of the Travels of John Magee, Pedlar and Flying Stationer, in North & South Britain in the Years 1806 and 1808* (Paisley: printed by G. Caldwell, 1826). Like Magee, the weaver William Thom was driven by grinding poverty to become a packman for a while. With four shillings he unwisely bought some 'little volumes, containing abridgements of modern authors, these authors being little to the general taste of the rustic population'. *Rhymes and Recollections of a Hand-loom Weaver* (second edition, London: Smith, Elder, 1845), pp. 23–24.

<sup>22</sup> *Memoirs of the late John Kippen, Cooper, in Methven, near Perth: to which is added, an Elegy on Peter Duthie, who was upwards of Eighty Years a Flying Stationer.* (Stirling: Randall, [1812]), pp. 20 et seqq. The reference to 'Arry's ware' (p. 21) is presumably to pseudo-Aristotle's *Midwifery*, his *Masterpiece*, or similar.

<sup>23</sup> J. S. Neish, *Reminiscences of Brechin and its Characters* (Dundee: *Weekly News Office*, 1878), pp. 88–97.

<sup>24</sup> William Cameron, *Hawkie, the Autobiography of a Gangrel*, ed.

[actually written] by John Strathesk (Glasgow: D. Robertson, 1888), pp. 64, 67–68. The Rev. James Leslie, minister of the rural parish of Fordoun, to the south of Aberdeen, commented, somewhat conventionally (and possibly in pious hope), on 'a marked alteration ... in the reading habits of the people' who had (apparently) moved on to more wholesome and uplifting material, having given up 'Wallace and Bruce ... Robin Hood and Little John, George Buchanan, Jack the Giant-killer, Leper the Tailor, and many other worthies that formerly amused the inmates of the smithy, the cottage and farm-kitchen'. 'Parish of Fordoun', in *New Statistical Account of Scotland: Kincardineshire* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1845), pp. 66–111 (p. 92).

<sup>25</sup> Ian A. Olson and John Morris, 'Mussel-Mou'd Charlie's (Charles Leslie) 1745 Song: "McLeod's Defeat at Inverury"', *Aberdeen University Review*, 58 (1999–2000), pp. 317–32 (pp. 322–23, 329, footnote 25) citing John Davidson, *Inverurie and the Earldom of Garioch* (Aberdeen: Brown, 1878), pp. 407–08.

<sup>26</sup> M. E. Brown, 'The Street Laureate of Aberdeen: Charles Leslie, alias Musle Mou'd Charlie, 1677–1782', in *Narrative Folksong: New Directions*, ed. by Carol L. Edwards and Kathleen E. B. Manley (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1985), pp. 365–81 (p. 370). *The Ballad Book*, ed. by George R. Kinloch (Edinburgh: no publisher, 1827).

<sup>27</sup> William Walker, *The Bards of Bon-Accord, 1375–1860* (Aberdeen: Edmond & Spark, 1887), p. 650, *sub The Caledonian Itinerary*; Thomas Seccombe, 'Laing, Alexander (1778–1838)', rev. H.C.G. Matthew, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (accessed 9 Feb. 2014). <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15882>>; *The Glenbuchath Ballads*, comp. by Robert Scott, ed. by David Buchan and James Moreira (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi,

with the Elphinstone Institute, Aberdeen University, 2007), p. xxi.

<sup>28</sup> Roger Leitch, “‘Here Chapman Billies Tak their Stand’: a Pilot Study of Scottish Chapmen, Packmen and Pedlars”, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 120 (1990), pp. 173–188. As Leitch (pp. 180–81) has shown, a chapman’s itinerant life was dangerous. It was no different in Aberdeenshire. *The Aberdeen Journal*, 1 January 1812, reported the violent murder of a chapman in the Glens of Foundland and the theft of the contents of his pack. Of fourteen chapmen, whose wills and testaments were recorded in the Aberdeen Commissary Court, most were dealing in cloth and textiles, and when printed material is listed at all, it looks largely as though the books were personal copies. For example, the effects of James Fowler (d. 1785), deceased chapman in Aberdeen, included an edition of Charles Johnstone’s *Adventures of a Guinea* and a printing of Eliza Haywood’s *Betsey Thoughtless*. Only Hugh Gare (d. 1768), chapman in Huntly, with his one dozen ‘proverbs and catechisms’ and ‘four packs of playing cards’, and William McKay (d. 1790), chapman in Fraserburgh, with his ‘4 doz catechisms and proverbs’, which were roused for 8*d.*, look as though they were retailing printed material. The source is: <http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk> I am very grateful to Vivienne Dunstan’s 2010 Dundee University doctoral thesis, ‘Reading Habits in Scotland circa 1750–1820’, for drawing attention to the usefulness of this resource.

<sup>29</sup> Old Meldrum, Rhynie and Tarves are all in Aberdeenshire, to the north-west of Aberdeen itself. At the time, they were small townships. See Leitch, ‘Chapman Billies’, p. 177. Clara Reeve, *School for Widows*, 3 vols (London: Hookham, Harrison & Co., and Miller, 1791), II, p. 259, has a ‘petty hawker and pedlar’ as a character in her novel, who ‘wove garters, laces and bobbins’, ‘sold ballads, and little chap-books’ and who described

herself as having ‘carried a basket before me, and my child at my back’.

<sup>30</sup> William Bannerman, *Aberdeen Worthies* (Aberdeen: Smith and Maclean, 1840), p. 13; pp. 90–91. Mrs Thomson (d. 1794) was the widow of Alexander Thomson who began business as a bookseller in Aberdeen in 1742. See *SBTI*.

<sup>31</sup> *Catalogue of the Extensive Library of John Hill Burton ... which will be Sold by Auction by ... Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge ... 16th of May 1881* (London: Sotheby, 1881), p. 2, lot 21.

<sup>32</sup> On approval invoice, Thomas Warburton, 15 Humphrey St, Cheetham Hill, Manchester, to George Ball, Muncie, Indiana, 28 June 1929. Bloomington, Indiana, Indiana University. Lilly Library. Ball MSS.

<sup>33</sup> George M. Fraser, *The Lone Shieling ...* (Aberdeen: Bon-Accord Press, 1908), p. 37; Buchan, *Ballad*, pp. 207–208.

<sup>34</sup> British Library shelfmark 1346.m.7.

<sup>35</sup> The broadsides were purchased by the British Museum from the bibliographical scholar and bookseller, Henry Stevens, in January 1856. Personal communications with the Rare Books, and Corporate Archive Teams, British Library.

<sup>36</sup> Crawford, *Society*, p. 6 and chapter 8; Buchan, pp. 215–16.

<sup>37</sup> For example, *Down by a River-side; or, Two True and Constant Lovers ...* [ESTC T34876], which notes, ‘Printed on the same sheet as “Bonny Helen Symon” and “An Elegy”, both intended to be separated’.

<sup>38</sup> Alistair R. Thompson, ‘Chapbook Printers’, *The Bibliothek*, 6 (1971–73), pp. 76–83 (p. 77) is sceptical about what can be used as evidence to identify chapbook printers. He argues that it can rarely be done ‘by evidence of content,

type-faces and woodcuts ... since all of these were common property.' However, the editors of *Small Books for the Common Man: a Descriptive Bibliography*, J. Meriton & C. Dumontet (London: British Library, 2010) have unhesitatingly used woodcuts as evidence of place of publication or as indicative of a particular printer (e.g. entries 343 and 437, and p. 906).

<sup>39</sup> *SBTL*, sub Thomas Duncan.

<sup>40</sup> Robertson's printings of *The Auld Goodman* [...], 1802, and *The Turn-Coat* [...], 1803, both carry a title-page woodcut of a man wearing a long coat and tricorne hat, with a walking stick and dog. The same cut appears on the title-page of the 'Inveraray' *Cumhadh do dh'Iarla Earraghaidhail* [...]. The cut seems to have stayed in Glasgow, for it subsequently appears in an edition of *The Merry and Diverting Exploits of George Buchanan*, published by Lumsden & Son, c. 1820. See S. Roscoe and R.A. Brimmell, *James Lumsden & Son of Glasgow: their Juvenile Books and Chapbooks* (Pinner: Private Libraries Association, 1981) pp. 116–17 (item 164).

<sup>41</sup> The identification of the same woodcuts used by Chalmers and earlier printers in Aberdeen corroborates the hitherto unsubstantiated claim of the Aberdeen bookseller and bibliographer, George Walker, that Aberdeen's 'official' printers inherited sets of woodcuts from each other. See Walker's *Aberdeen Awa'* (Aberdeen: Brown & Co., 1897), pp. 262–63.

<sup>42</sup> Both editions of Thomas the Rymer are nearly 50 pages long, and thus considerably exceed the size of chapbooks most frequently encountered.

<sup>43</sup> Stephen Farrell, 'Watson Taylor, George (1771–1841)', *History of Parliament* (online edition, London: History of Parliament Trust; accessed 10 Feb. 2014). <<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/watson-taylor-george-1771-1841>>

<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/watson-taylor-george-1771-1841>>

<sup>44</sup> A total of 905 chapbooks (the great majority of Aberdeen University's holdings) was surveyed for images. They date from the high point of production – the late eighteenth century and the first two decades of the nineteenth – and emanate predominately from northern England and the Central Belt of Scotland. Slightly over 11% had no woodcut images; and of the 793 that did (mostly on the title-page), 73% were depictions of humans and human activities. Images of domestic and farm animals, and of ships contributed significantly to the remaining 27%. Landscape views (with no human presence) are infrequent. For a discussion of Aberdeen University's chapbooks and their cataloguing, see Richard Turbet, "Things Worthy of Note": the Common Knowledge of the Chapbook', *Aberdeen University Review*, 62 (2008), pp. 23–29 (esp. p. 25).

<sup>45</sup> Victor Neuburg, *Chapbooks: a Bibliography of References...* (London: Vine Press, 1964), p.30, and elsewhere (including second edition, 1972, p. 70), presents an as yet unsolved problem. He notes a Scottish firm of J. Chalmers & Co. that issued chapbooks between 1777–1785, 1803–1810, none of which gave a place of publication. This assertion also appears in Thompson's article in *The Bibliotheck* (p. 83). Given the dates, the only known printing firm of that name actually in business in Scotland was the one in Aberdeen. But in so far as Chalmers gave his name as printer, in all instances so far known he gave the place of publication also.

<sup>46</sup> The same point has previously been made by Thompson, p. 77, regarding William Macnie of Stirling.

<sup>47</sup> Christopher MacLachlan, 'Scots Poetry before Burns', in *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland: Enlightenment and Expansion, 1707–1800*, ed. by Stephen W. Brown and Warren



McDougall (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), II, pp. 561–69.

<sup>48</sup> Recent sustained work includes Sheila O’Connell, *The Popular Print in England, 1550–1850* (London: British Museum Press, 1999); Diana Donald, *What is a Popular Print?* (Manchester: Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester, 2000); Brian Maidment, *Reading Popular Prints, 1790–1870*, second edition (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

<sup>49</sup> Roy Porter, ‘Review Article: Seeing the Past’, *Past and Present*, 118 (1988), pp. 186–205. Porter raises a number of exceedingly important points. ‘How should ... [visual images] be ‘read’?’ As ‘primarily ornamental ... at most reinforcing the information and sentiments which people derived from other sources ... or were they integral and special to the processes of creating and conveying the wider sign-systems of former times?’ (p. 187, and p. 196 on ‘visual clichés’.)

<sup>50</sup> Philip Luckombe, *Concise History of Printing* (London: no publisher, 1774), p. 76.

<sup>51</sup> On the general question of meaning and significance delivered (presumably not only for a particular text, but what sort of text it is) through illustration and other physical and typographical elements, see Maureen Bell, ‘*Mise-en-page*, Illustration, Expressive Form: Introduction’, in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, ed. by John Barnard, and D. F. McKenzie, with Maureen Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), IV, pp. 632–35 (IV, p. 632; IV, p. 635). Also Lori H. Newcomb on physical and typographical elements establishing a particular form of print in ‘Chapbooks’, in *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture: Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660*, ed. by Joad Raymond (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), I, pp. 471–90 (I, p. 483.)

<sup>52</sup> Alexandra Franklin, ‘The Art of Illustration in Bodleian Broadside Ballads before 1820’, *Bodleian Library Record*, 17 (2002), pp. 327–53 is an important exception.

<sup>53</sup> Patricia Fumerton and Anita Guerrini, ‘Introduction: Straws in the Wind’, in *Ballads and Broad-sides in Britain, 1500–1800*, ed. by Patricia Fumerton, Anita Guerrini and Kris McAbee (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 1–9 (p. 2).

<sup>54</sup> Samuel Bamford, *The Autobiography*, ed. by W. H. Chaloner, 2 vols. (London: Cass, 1967), I, pp. 89–90; Thomas Carter, *Memoirs of a Working Man* (London: Knight, 1845), pp. 20–21; Hugh Miller, *My Schools and Schoolmasters* (fourteenth edition, Edinburgh: Nimmo, 1869), pp. 28–29. William Wordsworth, *The Pedlar; Tintern Abbey; the Two-Part Prelude*, ed. by Jonathan Wordsworth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). *The Pedlar*, (69–76).

<sup>55</sup> Miss Hunter, ‘On Female Boarding Schools’, *The Lady’s Monthly Museum* (January 1811), pp. 5–11 (p. 7). Miss Hunter’s concerns were real in that there is little doubt that children did read chapbooks. See M. O. Grenby, *The Child Reader, 1700–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 103–04, p. 106. In parts of southern Scotland, chapbooks (presumably suitably selected by adults) were given away as New Year’s gifts. ‘Hansel Monday – the first Monday in the year – was marked by tossing a profusion of ballads and penny chap-books from windows among a crowd of clamorous youngsters’. William Chambers, *Memoir of William and Robert Chambers* (Edinburgh: Chambers, [1873]), p. 19.

<sup>56</sup> Victor E. Neuburg, *Popular Literature: a History and Guide ...* (London: Woburn Press, 1977), p. 103; Leslie Shepard, *The Broadside Ballad: a Study in Origins and Meanings* (London: Jenkins, 1962), p. 89; Harry B. Weiss, *A Book about Chapbooks: the People’s Literature of*

*Bygone Times* (Hatboro, Pa.: Folklore Associates, 1969), p. 1; Llewellynn Jewitt, 'Art among the Ballad-Mongers', *The Art Journal*, New Ser., 5 (1879), pp. 305–08 (p. 308. [Article continued in six continuing sections starting from *The Art Journal*, New Ser., 4 (1878), pp. 74–77]).

<sup>57</sup> Barry McKay, 'Cumbrian Chapbook Cuts: Some Sources and other Versions', in *The Reach of Print: Making, Selling and Using Books*, ed. by Peter Isaac and Barry McKay (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1998), pp. 65–84 (p. 71).

<sup>58</sup> Thomas Gretton, *Murders and Moralities: English Catchpenny Prints, 1800–1860* (London: British Museum Publications, 1980), p. 20.

<sup>59</sup> Charles Hindley, *Curiosities of Street Literature ...* (London: Reeves & Turner, 1871), p. ii.

<sup>60</sup> Isabel Cameron, *A Highland Chapbook* (Stirling: Eneas Mackay (Observer Press), 1928), pp. 21–22.

<sup>61</sup> James Wales, *Charles Leslie, 'Musel Mou'd Charlie' (1676/1677–1782) Jacobite Ballad Singer, 1780*. [Oil on canvas] Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland. Acc no.: PG 2624.

<sup>62</sup> Bryan O'Lin was a Connaught man born

His head it as bald, and his beard it  
was shorn;  
His temples far out, and his eyes far  
in,  
I'm a wonderful beauty says Bryan  
O'Lin.

(Taken from *Four Excellent New Songs; called Bryan O'Lin* [...], p. 2, lines.1–4.)

<sup>63</sup> This lack of speech bubbles (and captioning text) is one feature that differentiates eighteenth-century chapbook woodcuts from illustrations used in polemic tracts, pamphlets and satirical or political broadsides that frequently had a particular individual as subject. See

Helen Pierce, 'Images, Representation and Counter-representation', *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1, pp. 263–79.

<sup>64</sup> See, for example, the mezzotint of Queen Anne, by, and published by, John Smith, after Kneller, c. 1702–14. London: National Portrait Gallery. NPG D32795.

<sup>65</sup> Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1963), part 2, section xi, pp. 193–214.

<sup>66</sup> There are parallels in folk art, whereby objects are 're-purposed' and used in different contexts, e.g. ship carvings as shop signs, figureheads as memorials. See Martin Myrone, 'Figureheads and ship carvings', in *British Folk Art*, ed. by Ruth Kenny, Jeff McMillan and Martin Myrone (London: Tate Publications, 2014), pp. 92–101 (p. 92). Two of Chalmers's chapbooks, *The Rupert's Glory* [...] and *Five Excellent New Songs; Andro' and his Cutty Gun* [...] carry a title-page woodcut of a Turk's Head, not dissimilar to that sketched in Barbara Jones, *The Unsophisticated Arts* ([London]: Architectural Press, 1951), pp. 158–59, who identifies a Turk's Head as a commonly used tobacconist's shop sign.

<sup>67</sup> Whitney Davis, *A General Theory of Visual Culture* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 35–36.

<sup>68</sup> The woodcut of the two men sword fighting also appears in chapbooks published under the imprint of Robertson of Glasgow. See, for example, *The Dandy-O* [...], 1799.

<sup>69</sup> Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, repr. 1990), pp. 58–60. Percy Muir, *English Children's Books 1600 to 1900* (London: Batsford, 1954, repr. 1979), pp. 229–31.

<sup>70</sup> In his discussion of the graphic book, what Michael Twyman has called 'artifactual integration' was not a problem with woodcuts, as they could be set with, or surrounded by, text on the same page. But as he reminds us, 'artifactual integration does not lead inevitably to content integration'. In the case of chapbook garlands, with their diversity of songs within a single volume, his comments are certainly valid. See his 'The Emergence of the Graphic Book', in *A Millennium of the Book, 900–1900*, ed. by Robin Myers and Michael Harris (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1994), pp. 135–80 (pp. 159–60).

<sup>71</sup> For comments on the *Wandering Jew*; or, *the Shoemaker of Jerusalem*, see, for example, Arts Council of Great Britain, *French Popular Imagery [... an Exhibition held at the Hayward Gallery, 1974, under the auspices of the Association française d'action artistique]*. Catalogue ed. by P. S. Falla and Susan Lambert (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, [1974]), p. 46, p. 96; the majority of the images in Champfleury's chapter on Le Juif-Errant show him carrying a walking stick. It is an identifying feature. Champfleury, *Histoire de l'imagerie populaire* (Paris: Dentu, 1869), pp. 1–104; O'Connell, *The Popular Print*, p. 164 (fig. 6.15). I am grateful to Dr Giles Bergel, University of Oxford, for helpful advice, viz. that the *Wandering Jew's Chronicle* is an entirely separate ballad. (See his [wjc.bodleian.ox.ac.uk](http://wjc.bodleian.ox.ac.uk)).

<sup>72</sup> *Guy of Warwick and other Chapbook Romances: Six Tales from the Popular Literature of Pre-industrial England*, ed. by John Simons (Exeter: University Exeter Press, 1998), p. 134, includes a woodcut showing such features. There are countless examples. *The History of Robin Hood* [Burslem, 1795?], has a title-page woodcut of a very eighteenth-century scene with men and a dog probably out fowling.

<sup>73</sup> Gretton, *Murders and Moralities*, p. 74, makes a similar point in discussing an image of Queen Caroline used by John Pitts.

<sup>74</sup> In his analysis of the *Bibliothèque bleue*, Roger Chartier writes of title-page illustrations as 'furnishing a key to understanding the text'. See his *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 253.

<sup>75</sup> Brian Maidment, *Into the 1830s: Some Origins of Victorian Illustrated Journalism* (Manchester: Manchester Polytechnic Library, 1992), p. 9, notes woodcuts (in contrast to wood engraving) as often belonging to 'a crude broadside tradition, lacking proper perspective, with little tonal variation, and with a clumsy sense of scale'. Also Maidment, *Reading Popular Prints*, pp. 55, 90.

<sup>76</sup> William Hone, *Ancient Mysteries Described, especially the English Miracle Plays* (London: Hone, 1823), pp. 100–101, notes the attachment felt by the customers of the Shoreditch printer, Thomas Batchelar, towards the London printer's woodcuts. I am grateful to Barry McKay for this reference. Roscoe and Brimmell, pp. xix–xx, transcribe a letter of July 1807 from James Lumsden to Thomas Bewick in which Lumsden finds the style of some cuts sent up to the Glasgow firm 'very farr [sic] from what I expressed to you', and prepared to an unnecessarily high quality, 'the coarseness of the paper we use would quite destroy them'.

<sup>77</sup> Examples abound. See O'Connell, *The Popular Print*, for an example of both relevant and decorative figurative images on the same broadside, p. 125 (Figure 4.58).

<sup>78</sup> Catherine Molineux discusses Georgian tobacco shop advertisements in her illustrated 'Pleasures of the Smoke: "Black Virginians" in Georgian London's Tobacco Shops', *The William and Mary*

*Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 64 (2007), pp. 327–76.

<sup>79</sup> Chambers, *Memoir*, pp. 34–36

<sup>80</sup> *A Looking Glass for Dealers in Victual* (second edition; [Aberdeen]: printed for the Flying Stationers by A. Keith, [1800?]), p. 3, p. 5.

<sup>81</sup> Thomas Bewick, *A Memoir* (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1862), p. 247.

<sup>82</sup> Margaret Lambert and Enid Marx, *English Popular Art* (London: Batsford, 1951), p. 79.

<sup>83</sup> M. A. V. Gill, ‘The Potteries of Tyne and Wear, and their Dealings with the Beilby/Bewick Workshop’, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th ser., 4 (1971), pp. 151–70 (p. 154, footnote 19).

<sup>84</sup> John C. Baker, *Sunderland pottery* (fifth edition, Sunderland: Thomas Reed Industrial Press and Tyne and Wear Council Museums, 1984), p. 17. Wherein are a number of photographic examples of ceramic ware, transfer-printed, with the ‘Sailor’s Farewell’ (e.g. fig. 53).

<sup>85</sup> Crawford, *Society*, chapter 8, ‘The broadside mode’.

<sup>86</sup> *Aberdeen Journal*: the announcements of Alexander Brown, bookseller, 29 Sept 1800 and 28 August 1801; and of John Burnett, bookseller, 15 June 1801.

<sup>87</sup> *Aberdeen Journal*, 9 Sept 1801.

<sup>88</sup> Bound in the Indiana University Lilly Library volume of Aberdeen-printed chapbooks.

<sup>89</sup> Dating chapbooks from appearance is hazardous and a particularly rapid way to fall into error, but the National Library of Scotland dates the song-sheet, *Sir J. and his Lady* to c. 1806.

<sup>90</sup> Buchan, *Ballad*, pp. 219, 308 (footnote 36). There is some evidence that urban areas were tightening control on itinerant traders. The Fraserburgh Guildry announced that ‘chapmen and travelling merchants ... will also be debarred from vending any articles except on Market days, and then only on payment of the regulated dues’, *Aberdeen Journal*, 4 and 11 January 1809.

<sup>91</sup> Fairley, ‘Chapbooks’, p. 34.

<sup>92</sup> Fairley, ‘Chapbooks’, pp. 33–34. The 1776 version of *Andrew Lammie* is very similar to Child 233B.



**Note:** The Chalmers press sometimes placed its imprint within square brackets, which have here been retained and transcribed in the list.

- 1     *The Agreeable Songster, being a Choice Collection of Songs. Containing, The Irish Wedding. Willie Wastlie's Wife. Orange and the Blue. The French Navy Cover'd with Glory. Croppies Lie Down.*  
[Chalmers & Co. Printers, Aberdeen.]  
IU.
- 2     *The Bride's Burial. To which is added, The Siege of Gibraltar. And the Barking Barber, or, New Bow, Wow Wow.*  
[Chalmers & Co. Printers, Aberdeen]  
ESTC T166690; NLS.
- 3     *The Chaplet being a Choice Collection of Songs. Containing, Sailors Journal. The Traveller. The Merry Fellow. The Arethusa. Jenny and Roger. The Butterfly.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
IU.
- 4     *The Chearful Companion, being a Choice Collection of Songs. Containing, When my Money was Gone. The Batchellor Miller. John and Nell. Hark! The Huntsman. Jenny and Roger. The Mournful Maid. A Hunting Glee. The Modes of the Court. The Cottage on the Moor.*  
[Chalmers & Co. Printers, Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T165125; NLS.
- 5     *Confusion; or, the World in Disorder*  
Colophon: Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.  
ESTC T163145; NLS.
- 6     *The Crafty Farmer. The Old Man Kill'd with the Cough. Rat Tat Too. Jack the Guinea Man. Polwart on the Green.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T192093; NLS.
- 7     *The Crafty Squire's Garland. To which is added, The Betray'd Lover.*  
[Aberdeen: printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T192096; NLS; IU.

- 8    *The Cruel Cooper of Kirkaldy. In Three parts.*  
Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Aberdeen.  
ESTC T192253; NLS; IU.
  
- 9    *The Cruel Step-Mother, or the Unhappy Son. To which is added, Fame Urg'd him to the Field.*  
Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Aberdeen.  
ESTC T192379; NLS; IU.
  
- 10   *The Duke of Gordon's Birth Day. To which is added, The Last Good Night of the Valiant Johnny Armstrong.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreeet Aberdeen.]  
IU; OU.
  
- 11   *Eight Excellent New Songs; Called Love and a Bumper. Myrtilla. The Charms of Bright Molly. The Highland King. The Highland Queen. The Bee. Liberty. Roving Sailor.*  
Aberdeen: [Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreeet, Aberdeen.]  
OU.
  
- 12   *An Excellent New Song: Called The Farmer's Glory.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreeet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T198031; NLS.
  
- 13   *A Famous Sea-fight, between Capt Ward, and the Rainbow. To which is added, The Ship Paid Off. Jack Tar. Jolly Toper.*  
Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreeet Aberdeen.  
GU; OU.
  
- 14   *Five Excellent New Songs; Called the Disappointed Sailor. The Rapture. Teach me the Art of Love. Lord Thomas of Winsberry. The Ship Paid Off.*  
Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreeet Aberdeen.  
GU.
  
- 15   *Five Excellent New Songs; Andro' and his Cutty Gun. Buttery May. The Jolly Beggar. The Carle he Came o'er the Craft. Fy, gar Rub her o'er wi' Strae.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreeet Aberdeen.]  
IU.
  
- 16   *Four Excellent New Songs; Called Barbara Allen's Cruelty; or the Young Man's Tragedy. The County of Cavin. The Injur'd Fair. The Thirsty Lover.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreeet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T182720; NLS.

- 17 *Four Excellent New Songs; Called Bryan O'Lin. Capt. Delany's Ramble. The Lady's Answer. Lovely Nancy and the Handsome Serjeant.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen]  
ESTC T182757; NLS.
- 18 *Four Excellent New Songs; Called The Greenland Fishery. Pull Away, Pull away. Tom Halliard; or, The Sailor's Dying Request. My Willy was a Salor Bold.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
IU.
- 19 *Four Excellent New Songs; Called The Jovial Tinker and the Farmer's Daughter. To which are added, The Conghannan Maid. The Amorous Lover. The Grateful Admirer.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T182760; NLS.
- 20 *Four Excellent New Songs; Called The Poor Man's Council; or, The Married Man's Guide. The Shady Green Tree. The Dumb Woman Turn'd Scold. The Beds of Roses.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T182762; NLS.
- 21 *Four Excellent New Songs; Called Ketty's Love to Jocky. Johnny's Kind Answer. The Fair Maid. The Longing Maid.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
GU; OU.  
*Ketty's Love to Jocky* doubtfully attributed to Rev. John Skinner of Longside, Aberdeenshire.
- 22 *Four Excellent New Songs; Entitled Johnny's Grey-Breeks, with The Answer. The Tempest. The Considerate Nymph.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T182818; NLS; IU.
- 23 *Jocky to the Fair, with The Answer. To which is added, The Miller of Dee. Cruel Creature.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T188407; NLS; IU.
- 24 *The Jolly Young Fellow. To which is added, The Scottish Kail Brose. The Cogie of Ale. My Jolly Sailor Dear.*  
Printed by Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen  
OU.

- 25 *Last Dying Speech, and Travels, of William Walker ... to which is added, The Plumber.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T155014; NLS; GU.
- 26 *The Lovely Soldier. To which is added Cupid's Revenge, being an Account of a King who Slighted all Women, and was at length Forc'd to Marry a Beggar. The Princess Elizabeth's Lamentation while a Prisoner at Wood-stock in 1554.*  
Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.  
IU.
- 27 *The Mournful Lady's Garland.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
IU.
- 28 *The Norfolk Wonder; or, the Maiden's Trance. Being a Warning Piece to all Wicked Sinners to Forsake their Sins.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co., Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC N471834; NLS.
- 29 *The Patient Countess. An Old Ballad.*  
Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Aberdeen.  
ESTC T197795; NLS; IU.
- 30 *The Rock and the Wee Pickle Tow.*  
[Chalmers & Co. Aberdeen.]  
IU.
- 31 *The Rupert's Glory, an Excellent Sea Song. A New Song. Bacchus – the Best Doctor. The Charms of Feasting.*  
[Chalmers & Co. Printers, Aberdeen.]  
IU.
- 32 *The Sailor Bold. To which is added, The Recruiting Serjeant. Wat ye wha I met Yestreen.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T201695; NLS; GU; IU.
- 33 *The Sailor's Tragedy, or, False Oaths Punished. To which is added, The Distressed Sailors on the Rocks of Scilly, The Gallant Sailor.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
PU.



- 34 *A Servant Man Became a Queen. To Which is added, The Highland Queen. My Granny Was.*  
Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.  
GU.
- 35 *The Ship in Distress. M'Naughton's Valour. Merrey Maid of Fifteen. Love and Wine.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
IU.
- 36 *Six Excellent New Songs; Called Jenny's Bawbee. Cauld Kale in Aberdeen. Cock up your Beaver. The Merry Taylor. The Maid Gaed to the Mill. Auld Sir Simon the King.*  
Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.  
IU.
- 37 *The Songster's Delight, being a Choice Collection of Songs. Containing, My Nannie O. Bonny Jean of Aberdeen. The Dutchess of Newcastle's Lamentation[.] The London Merchant*  
[Chalmers & Co. Printers, Aberdeen]  
ESTC T155690; NLS; OU; IU.
- 38 *The Songster's Delight, being a Choice Collection of Songs. Containing, The Young Man's Dream, with the Maid's Kind Answer[.] The Rover. The Milk Maid, The Returning Sailor. The Rat Tat Too. Or Chickibiddy.*  
[Chalmers & Co. Printers, Aberdeen]  
PU
- 39 *The Taylor's Garland. In Five Parts.*  
Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.  
NLS.
- 40 *Three Excellent New Songs; Called The Irish Wedding. The Wee Wifukie. Or, This is no Me. A New Song in Praise of His Majesty's Forces.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
ESTC T174805; NLS; OU.
- 41 *Three Excellent New Songs; Called The Wicked Wife[.] Think na lang, Lassie[.] The Yorkshire Men too Sharp for the Newmarket Men.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
OU.

- 42 *Three Excellent New Songs: Called the Young Laird of Ochiltree. Macpherson's Rant. Hey Jenny Come Down to Jock.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
IU.
- 43 *Two Excellent New Songs; Called the Midnight Messenger or, A Sudden Call from Earthly Glory to the Cold Grave. In a Dialogue between Death and a Rich Man ... To which is added, I Wish that you were Dead Goodman.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
IU.
- 44 *Two Excellent New Songs; Called Will Ye Go and Marry. To which is added, Edom of Gordon.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
IU.
- 45 *The Ulster Tragedy, or, The Fortunate Lovers. To which is added, The Kiss; or, How can you Blame? The General Toast. His Wanting the Will.*  
[Printed by J. Chalmers & Co. Castlestreet Aberdeen.]  
IU.

#### CHAPBOOK TITLES ASSIGNED TO CHALMERS

- 1 *Christ on the Cross, Suffering for Sinners*  
Printed in February 1785.  
Ascribed by Kellas Johnstone to the Chalmers Press.  
ESTC T201375 AU
- 2 *Cogitations upon Death; or, Mirrour of Man's Misery*  
Printed October 26th, 1782  
Ascribed by Kellas Johnstone to the Chalmers Press.  
ESTC T190295 AU. An 8vo edition previously published by John Forbes of Aberdeen, 1681. (ESTC R171861).
- 3 Falkirk, John (pseud): *Comical and Witty Jokes of John Falkirk the Merry Piper*  
Aberdeen: printed in the year 1790  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of the tailpiece woodcuts.  
ESTC T194393 OU

- 4 *The Farmers Glory.*  
Entered according to order.  
Heavily and badly trimmed.  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcut.  
GU.
- 5 *Four Excellent New Songs. Called Ketty's Love to Jocky ...  
Johnny's Kind Answer. The Fair Maid. The Longing Maid.*  
Printed in the year 1782.  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcuts.  
ESTC T182827 NLS.  
See note to item 21, above.
- 6 *Four Excellent New Songs; Called Ketty's Love to Jocky. Johnny's  
Kind Answer. The Fair Maid. The Longing Maid.*  
Printed in the year 1784.  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of ornamental type pieces.  
OU.  
See note to item 21, above.
- 7 *Four Excellent New Songs. The Great Messenger of Mortality; or,  
A Dialogue betwixt Death and a Lady.*  
No imprint.  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcuts.  
GU.
- 8 *Four Excellent New Songs: The New Way of the Lass of Benochie.  
The Mills of Drum. The Hopetouns at Banff. Petticoat Wooing.*  
Printed at Aberdeen October, 1793.  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcuts  
ESTC 182939 NLS.
- 9 *The Garioch Garland: [the] Life and Death of the Famous Charles  
Leslie, Ballad-singer, commonly called Musle-mow'd Charlie. Who  
died at Old Rayne, aged Five Score and Five. To which is added,  
Two excellent New Songs, entitled and called Johny Lad and the  
Old Way of the Highland Laddie, by the foresaid Author. With the  
Right and True Effigies of the said Charles Leslie.*  
Licensed and Entered according to Order.  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcuts  
ESTC T176926 OU

- 10 *The Old Scots Poem of Chryste-Kirk on the Green, attempted in Latin Heroic Verse.*  
Printed in the Year 1772  
ESTC T193471: tipped-in note on BL copy assigns to Aberdeen.  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of title-page ornament.  
Latin translation attributed to Rev. John Skinner of Longside, Aberdeenshire.
- 11 Lothian Tom.  
*The History and Comical Transactions of Lothian Tom, in six parts. Part I*  
Still doubtful. Maybe printed in Aberdeen. Carries woodcut of arms of Aberdeen.  
ESTC T194134 NLS
- 12 Mac-Cloud, George: *The Mutual Love between Christ and his Church in two Sermons*  
Printed in the Year 1783  
Ascribed by Kellas Johnstone to the Chalmers Press  
ESTC T170757 AU
- 13 *Peter and Betterish; or, The Woman's Spleen Abated; being a Little Labour well Bestowed, in Quelling the Rage and Fury of a Scold. Performed by Peter Painter, after a Fierce and dangerous Combat with Betterish Boldface his Wife*  
Aberdeen: printed in 1739  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcuts  
ESTC T206305 NLS
- 14 Price, Laurence: *A Key to Open Heaven's Gate! Or a Ready Pathway to Lead Men to Heaven*  
Printed August 6th 1784  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcuts; ascribed by Kellas Johnstone to the Chalmers Press  
AU
- 15 Shepherd, T., *The Christian's Pocket-book: being a Collection of Familiar Exhortations to the Practice of Piety*  
Printed in the Year 1782  
Ascribed by Kellas Johnstone to the Chalmers Press  
ESTC T165816 AU



- 16 *[Three excellent new ] Songs, entitled: The Cries of the Poor against the Oppression of the Rich. Donald's Lamentation for his Whisky Pot. Think na' lang Lassie*  
Printed in May, 1781  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcut.  
ESTC T176932 OU
- 17 *A Warning to the Wicked; Containing Wonderful Prodigies of the Judgments of God upon Atheists*  
Pried [sic] in the year 1781  
Ascribed by Kellas Johnstone to the Chalmers Press  
ESTC T193068 AU
- 18 *The Whole Prophecies of Scotland, England, France ... by Thomas Rymer, Merling, Beid...Sybilla.*  
Aberdeen: [Chalmers & Co.], 1774  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcuts  
ESTC T17228 BL
- 19 *The Whole Prophecies of Scotland, England, France ... by Thomas Rymer, Merling, Beid...Sybilla.*  
Aberdeen: M,DCC,LXXIX [1779]  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcuts  
ESTC T27895 BL; AU
- 20 Wilcocks, Thomas: *A Choice Drop of Honey from the Rock Christ.*  
Printed in July 1782  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcuts; ascribed by Kellas Johnstone to the Chalmers Press  
ESTC T165339 AU
- 21 *The Wonder of Wonders.*  
Printed in this present year  
Assigned to Chalmers on the basis of woodcut.  
GU
- [22] *Aristotle's True Fortune-teller, containing a Great many Rare and True Receipts for Love.*  
Aberdeen: Published for the instruction of Young Men and Maids, Bachelors and Widows, 1786.  
Possibly Chalmers (assuming the place of publication is correct) but the title-page woodcut not identified elsewhere.  
ESTC T183686 OU

## ABBREVIATIONS

|     |                                     |
|-----|-------------------------------------|
| AU  | Aberdeen University Library         |
| BL  | British Library                     |
| GU  | Glasgow University Library          |
| IU  | Indiana University. Lilly Library   |
| NLS | National Library of Scotland        |
| OU  | Oxford University. Bodleian Library |
| P   | Princeton University Library        |

## BRITISH LIBRARY. 1346.M.7 (1–42): A SHORT-TITLE LIST OF BROADSIDES

DA: direct attribution to Chalmers

IndA: indirect attribution. See main text for explanation

- 1 *Sailor Bold. The Bride's Burial. The Jolly Toper.*  
Dated: March 12th 1776. IndA  
ESTC T47018; T29600
- 2 *The Six Stages of Man's Life Displayed. The Heavenly Damsel, or, The Parent's Blessing.*  
Dated: Feb 1776. DA  
ESTC T36068; T48400
- 3 *I. The Cruel Knight and the Farmer's Daughter. II. The New Way of Gilderoy.*  
Dated: March 4th 1776. DA (Ornamental type pieces as in *The Mevis*, Chalmers, 1774.)  
ESTC T34452
- 4 *The Maid's Hopes in the Lottery. The Lass on the Brow of the Hill[.] Get Married as Soon as you Can. Peggy Bawn.*  
Dated: February 13 1776. IndA  
ESTC T38876; T37553; T43834; T40802  
[Repeated as item 12]  
*The Lass on the Brow of the Hill* attrib. to Mary Jones (ESTC).
- 5 *Two New Songs, entituled I. The Spanish Man of War. II. Robin Hood. What Ails the Lasses at Me?*  
Dated: May 6th. IndA (Ornamental type pieces as in 20, below).  
ESTC T52112; T52355

- 6 *Young Grigor's Ghost [and] The Butcher's Daughter.*  
Dated: May 14th 1776. IndA  
ESTC T52880; T29820
- 7 *Down by a River-side ... Bonny Helen Symon. An Elegy.*  
Dated: March 20th 1776. DA  
ESTC T34876; T22968; T139051
- 8 *The Free and Accepted Mason. A Bohny [sic] Young Lad is my Jocky. Jocky's Kind Answer. [p.2]: The Duke of Gordon's Daughter.*  
Dated: September 8th 1775.  
Printed both sides.  
ESTC T40167; T35013
- 9 *Captain Delany's Garland, containing 5 New Songs. I. Captain Delany's Garland. II. Robin Hood and the Proud Pedlar. III. Roger the Miller. IV. The Liverpool Sailor. V. Love and Friendship.*  
Dated: July 1775. IndA (Woodcuts of a coastal smack and schooner as in 30 below).  
ESTC T19914
- 10 *The Buchanshire Tragedy; or Sir James the Ross. The Taylor of Hogerglen's Wedding.*  
Dated: February 3d 1776. IndA  
ESTC T29757; T49893  
*The Buchanshire Tragedy* attrib. to Michael Bruce (ESTC).
- 11 *The Blind Beggar's Daughter of Bednal-green. The Bonny Highland Lad.*  
Dated: June 27th 1776.  
ESTC T22897
- 12 Repeated – as item 4
- 13 *The Bonny Lass of Bennachie. 2. The Slighted Maid's Kind Invitation, or O the Money!*  
Dated: March 1776. IndA  
ESTC T22975
- 14 *Coridon and Clora. The Flowers of Edinburgh. The Praises of the Weavers. Oxters my Lassie.*  
Dated: September 1775. IndA  
ESTC T34175; T35629; T43535; T44160

- 15 *The Berkshire Lady's Garland: or, Batchelors of Every Station. The Birks of Invermay. The Price of a Lady's Gown.*  
Dated: May 1775. IndA.  
ESTC T21544; T44287
- 16 *The Wandering Jew, or, The Shoemaker in Jerusalem ... Barbara Allen's Cruelty[;] or, The Young Man's Tragedy.*  
Dated: Sept 26th 1775. DA.  
ESTC T52188; T21372
- 17 *An Excellent New Song on the Battle of Culloden. Composed by John Teacle ... The Haughs of Cromdale.*  
Dated: April 4 1776.  
ESTC T33741; T36035
- 18 *The Roving Maids of Aberdeen's Garland: containing, I. The Humours of the Age... II. The Roving Maids of Aberdeen. III. The Golden Glove.*  
Dated: 30 Jan 1776. Ind A (Ornamental type pieces as in 2, above and 40, below).  
ESTC T45247
- 19 *The Bristol Garland ... An Excellent New Song entituled Lord Thomas's Tragedy.*  
Dated: 27 April 1776.  
ESTC T29674; T33738
- 20 *The Black-a-moor in the Wood. Balance a Straw. An Excellent New Song Entituled, The Bonnet so Blue.*  
Dated: Dec 20th 1775. IndA  
ESTC T22872; T21336.  
*Balance a Straw* attrib. to Smollett (ESTC).
- 21 *St Bernard's Vision. Mournful Melpomene: or, The Lady's Farewel to the World.*  
Dated: June 20th 1776. IndA  
ESTC T48519; T41474
- 22 *The Christian Sacrifice ... The Soul's Breathing after Christ ...*  
Dated: July 16th 1775. IndA  
ESTC T30671; T49538
- 23 *The Factor's Garland, in Four Parts ... Corn-Riggs are Bonny.*  
Dated: June 6th 1776. IndA. (Ornamental type pieces as in 40, below.)  
ESTC T35136



- 24 *Charly is my Darling. O'er Bogie. The Wandering Shepherdess.*  
Undated, but 1775 or 1776.  
DA  
ESTC T30518
- 25 *An Excellent New Ballad, entituled Follow me over the Mountain. Three New Songs: viz I. Thro' the Wood Laddie. II. The Weaver. III. Bob and his Landlady.*  
Dated: March 20th 1776. DA. (Ornamental type pieces as in *The Mevis*, Chalmers, 1774.)  
ESTC T33717; T50288  
Repeated as item 33
- 26 *A Memorable Song on the Lamentable, Bloody, and Unhappy Hunting at Chevy-Chace. Hearts of Oak. Clout the Cauldron.*  
Dated: 28 April 1776 IndA  
ESTC T39167; T139270  
*Hearts of Oak* attrib. to Garrick (ESTC).
- 27 *My Son Johnny O ... II. A Bunch of Green Ribbons. Andrew Lammie: or, Mill of Tiftie's Anne. II. Betty Brown.*  
Dated: 22 May 1776. IndA. (Ornamental type pieces as in 2, above).  
ESTC T41675; T21887
- 28 *The New Jerusalem. The Mourning Soul for Christ.* Undated but 1775 or 1776.  
ESTC T39876; T41490
- 29 *Montrose Lines ... Woo'd and Married and a'. A New Song.*  
Dated: 8 July 1776. IndA  
ESTC T41402; T52693  
*Montrose Lines* attrib. to James Graham, 1st Marquis of Montrose  
*Woo'd and Married and a'* attrib. to Mrs Scott (ESTC).
- 30 *The Gosford Tragedy ... The Sake of Gold. A Love-song, to the Tune of Andrew Lammie.*  
Dated: August 1775. DA  
ESTC: T35748; T47035
- 31 *The Jovial Tinker & Farmer's Daughter. The Rakes of Malo. Rule Britannia. The King and the Bold Sailor.*  
Undated but 1775 or 1776.  
ESTC T29238; T29414; T143081  
*Rule Britannia* attributed to David Mallet (ESTC).

- 32 *The Gallant Grahams. Captain Johnston's Last Farewell.*  
Dated: 2 March 1776. DA  
ESTC T40390; T19919
- 33 Repeated as item 25
- 34 *The Greenwich Garland ... Two New Songs, a Lgiht [sic] Heart and a Thin Pair of Breeches. The Spinning of the Tow.*  
Dated: July 5 1775. DA  
ESTC: T35874; T52111
- 35 *I. Fair Margaret's Misfortunes ... II. The Auld Goodman. III. Roslin Castle. IV. The Young Damsel's Lamentation. V. The Number of Kisses.*  
Dated: 25 April 1776. DA and IndA. (Ornamental type pieces as in 20, above, and in Patrick Walker, *Some Remarkable Passages on the Life of Alexander Peden*, Chalmers, 1763).  
ESTC T35166
- 36 *John Armstrong's Last Good-night ... The Downfall of Gilderoy. An Excellent New Song: intituled, Love will Find out the Way.*  
Dated: 6 May 1776 DA  
ESTC T29104; T34882
- 37 *The Babes in the Wood. The Rainy Bow[.]*  
Dated: 11 February 1776 DA  
ESTC T21317; T46262
- 38 *Two Excellent New Songs, intituled, John of Badenyon, II: The New Way of Tullochgorum. A New Song on the Jovial Sailor.*  
IndA  
*John of Badenyon* dated: January 1776  
*Jovial Sailor* dated: February 2 [1776]  
ESTC T52072; T39997  
*John of Badenyon* and *Tullochgorum* usually attributed to Rev. John Skinner of Longside, Aberdeenshire.
- 39 *Gill Morice. Time Enough Yet.*  
Dated: Sept 23 1775 DA  
ESTC T40813; T50329
- 40 *A Dialogue between Death and a Beautiful Lady. The Sorrowful Lover's Regrate.*  
Dated: May the [5th?] 1776 DA  
ESTC T31799; T49530

- 41 *The Ravelled Booking of the Ord. Ranty Tanty.*  
Dated: April 1776 DA  
ESTC T46308; T46284
- 42 *The Yarmouth Tragedy ... The Witches' Song.*  
Dated: Sept 7 1775  
ESTC T52859; T52614